

**THE BLENDING OF OLD AND NEW AS A
DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY**

(*CASE STUDIES IN SINGAPORE*)

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Abstract

Projects blending old and new are studied as a stream of Singapore's urban renewal in this dissertation. Blending here mainly indicates combining conservation and new construction into one project. When conservation started to gain prominence in Singapore from the mid-1980s, market demand also stimulated new developments. Decisions have to be made when conservation buildings confront new development. In such situations, projects blending old and new may be the solution. By incorporating old with new, the historical value of the old part could be partially kept while the requirement of the market could be fulfilled.

After the first project of this kind appeared in Singapore around 1991, blending of old and new as a methodology was quickly applied in many other projects, which gradually formed a trend. In this dissertation, five projects of blending old and new are studied. Their production processes are examined individually and lessons are drawn from those processes. The performances of the authority, the developers and the architects of each project are also analyzed. It is hoped that by drawing lessons and distilling experiences from the past practice, this dissertation could provide some references for other developments; help to avoid similar mistakes in future practice and contribute to rational construction of the city.

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Chapter One Introduction

1.1. Introduction to the scope of study

The way a city is developed is largely dependent on the capability of people living there. Before the Industrial Revolution, most cities grew slowly in a constant way. Cities were formed gradually; a building that had stood for hundreds of years might be still in use. After the Industrial Revolution, human capability was greatly enhanced by new technologies. Buildings could be built much faster and stronger. More land was occupied by new urban developments. The whole world experienced a period of intensive construction which still continues today in some areas. When urban areas have expanded to the extent that traveling time by car has to be calculated in hours, the land in the centre of a city usually occupied by old structures become more valuable. Many old structures disappeared to give way to new developments. In the 1970s, when the oil crisis slowed down the speed of economic development, the value of built environment began to obtain widespread recognition throughout the world. Conservation rose as an important issue while new urban developments still continued. Since many built environment heritages are located near the centre of a city, it often happens that the most valuable land is occupied by structures worthy of conservation, thereby giving rise to the tension. The value of the land cannot be best maximized and old structures are always threatened by aggressive development intentions. In this situation, projects blending old and new appeared to be a solution of compromise. As the main study target of this dissertation,

projects blending old and new mainly indicate projects that consisted of both conservation and new developments.

1.1.1 Blending and conservation of built environment

Projects blending both old and new are not purely conservation projects, but they could be regarded as a complement of conservation. Nowadays, the importance of conservation has been widely recognized. Most countries have designated their own heritage buildings, districts, or even cities. However, these designations cannot cover all those heritages and, furthermore, sufficient land should be planned for new urban development. Standing in areas coveted by new urban developments, these neglected heritages are often targeted for demolition.

Under such circumstances, projects blending old and new can provide another avenue for these forgotten heritages. They could conserve or partially conserve heritages which are supposed to be demolished. More city heritages can be preserved in this way while purely conservation work is carried out within the scope of heritage preservation. These projects, blending old and new, could be regarded as an extension of normal conservation effort or as its complement

The methods of conservation in these blending projects also differ from normal conservation projects. In most cases, not all existing structures could be conserved. The requirements of the proposed new development have to be considered as well. Once the decision of conservation is made, adaptation and reuse would be given more emphasis than simple restoration.

1.1.2 Blending and new developments

For projects blending old and new, new construction is the counterpart of conservation. But they are not completely new developments either. Since the parts to be conserved are often located in a central area of the city, the new construction would enjoy this inherent advantage of location and, possibly the charm of the old buildings. However, for the component of new construction, they have to bear more constraints than a completely new development. Existing conditions might be more complicated. Because conservation is included, how to create a harmonious atmosphere becomes a challenge for the new constructions.

1.1.3 Motivation of study

Cities are always struggling with the balance between conservation and new development. This struggle is particularly intense in old city centers. Projects of blending can act as a buffer in this struggle. By providing both old and new, the historical and cultural values of existing structures could be partially, if not fully, conserved and more land is also available for new development. These blending projects can be regarded as a transition area for both old and new, in which the old and new could co-exist and be blended together.

In fact, blending is unavoidable when old and new structures come together. In many situations, blending is completed unintentionally in a disordered way. When a classic historic building is dwarfed among its skyscraper neighbors, or a six-lane-highway goes through a historical district, some unintentional blending happens.

In the projects studied in this dissertation, blending is intentionally carried out. In some cases, through specific arrangement, the old and new could be blended in a way acceptable to most people, which suggests that except unintentional blending, there are alternative ways of blending which might benefit the city more. This study is motivated by the desire to understand such an alternative way by investigating concrete examples of such kind of projects.

The study is primarily conducted in Singapore. As an island city-state with an area of 699.1square kilometers, land is one of the most valuable resources. Hence the struggle between conservation and new developments would be more intense than many other countries with vast land. Once a building or district is conserved, less land is available for new developments, at least in the near future. In this situation, blending of old and new, as a development strategy was applied in this country as early as the end of 1980s, when conservation issues were still at a nascent stage. After conservation buildings were designated and conservation districts were marked, the strategy of blending was applied to further complement conservation. In a country with less complicated administrative system, the strategy could be effectively implemented. Several projects based on this blending development strategy have been constructed in this city. With conservation part in it, most of these projects are located near the city centre, providing a specific urban land-scape for the city. They have formed a small trend of urban development with increasing significance. For these reasons, the projects blending old and new in Singapore are targeted as the focus of this study.

How was blending implemented from planning to construction in the context of Singapore? As products, how were they produced? How were the urban spaces

eventually shaped by these projects? In order to answer these questions, the processes of these projects are examined because if we want to understand more about current urban space, we need to know the processes which produce the space.¹ The process here mainly indicates the entire development process for the current development, from the government's most original development intention to full completion.

A thorough examination of projects' processes is closely related to the people or organizations that operate those processes. Therefore, a further investigation of the people or organization involved into those processes is necessary. With the premise that *commodification, which is basic to the analysis of capitalist order, is extended to space to entangle the physical milieu in the productive system of capitalism as a whole*², the organization of the built environment and society are all deeply related to the production of space.³ Since urban space could be deemed as a social product, as argued by Henri Lefebvre⁴, the production process could also be regarded as a social process. During this social process, many facts in forms of different roles and interests would get involved at different levels. These roles may include the governments, landowners, and financiers, planning authorities, professionals and space users. All the groups represent different interests and would affect the outcome. The built urban space is *a manifesto of a set of policies or interests as solidified in physical space or its management*⁵. The values and aspirations of the players involved in the production process would be inevitably reflected. In Singapore the roles involved in the production process are less complicated

¹ Ali Madanipour, *Design of Urban Space : An Inquiry into a Socio-Spatial Process* (Chichester ; New York: Wiley, 1996).p106

² Ibid. P132

³ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford, OX, UK ; Cambridge, Mass.: : Blackwell, 1991).

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Madanipour, *Design of Urban Space : An Inquiry into a Socio-Spatial Process*.

than most countries due to its concise administration structure. The interests of government could be fully represented by the government agents. The developers, if there are any, would represent the private sector. In most cases, the participation of professionals mainly refers to that of architects because the work of other professionals such as planners, financiers and urban designers has been already covered by the government agent in Singapore. The public, which acts as another important role in some countries, seldom take part in the production process in Singapore. Therefore, a multi-player game is mainly played by three roles during implementation in Singapore. The performances of these three roles would be analyzed further in this dissertation after the basic production processes of projects are examined.

1.2 Objectives of the study

1 Through studying selected cases, to trace the production processes of them and find out the forces that have impacted on the final results.

2 Through analyzing those production processes of cases studied, to find out how different roles are involved in the production processes.

3 Through setting the cases into a general urban development process, to distill some lessons and guidelines which can be referred to in future practice.

It is hoped that for those who want to know more about Singapore's urban development, the study could provide them with a more comprehensive picture. For those who are interested in the kind of projects studied, the study would help them look into the specific processes of those projects, as one of the valuable resources containing first-hand

information. For people who want to start a similar project, the cases studied in this dissertation could be used as references. For different roles which are or will be involved in the production processes of such projects, the experience distilled from selected projects in this study would be useful to improve their performances. It is also expected that the lessons drawn from the cases studied could help to avoid similar mistakes in future practice and help in rational construction of the city.

1.3 Towards a Methodology

In this study, the project of blending old and new is deemed as one kind of urban renewal practice of Singapore. Some work has been done and documented about these practices. The Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA) had published some documents to record its achievements and plans on this topic. Some studies about particular projects also have been done by different approaches. A thesis writing about the case studies of Bugis Junction and Bugis Village, which are also cases studied in this dissertation, was once completed by Neoh Sue May in 1997. The main focus of her study is usage evaluation. In 1994, Kuah Khun Eng wrote a paper about Bugis Street. His main approach is from a viewpoint of historical continuity.

However, except the recorded documents of URA, further researches directly related to blending projects in Singapore are still absent. For the production processes of these projects, most of the details still remain in memories of related persons. As such, the work to discover these production processes is proposed as the first step of this study.

1.3.1 Case selection

A total of 5 case studies have been selected in this study. The following criteria are used as a reference in the selection of the cases.

Time of development: The kind of projects studied in this dissertation firstly rose in Singapore in the late 1980s. They were further developed and matured in 1990s. Cases are selected from different points along this timeline so that the general development processes of these projects could be better understood. Bugis Village was developed at the end of 1980s, which could be regarded as a pioneering project of studied kind. Bugis Junction was developed in the beginning of 1990s, and represents another time slot. The production process of Central Mall covered the middle of 1990s and the cases in China Square are finished in the beginning of 2000s. If combining all the time slots, the time scope of the studied cases can cover a period from the end of 1980s to the beginning of 2000s.

Extent of blending: Blending is the focus of this study. However, the proportion of the old and new might vary greatly in different projects. In a strictly conserved district, there might also be some new buildings embedded among old structures. Meanwhile, there are also some historical buildings standing among modern office towers. In this dissertation, the situations mentioned above are deliberately avoided. In order to better understand how the old and the new are blended, the proportion of conservation and new structures is carefully considered. In the cases selected, blending is usually done comprehensively.

Interests involved: Generally speaking, blending could be applied to a wide range of projects including commercial, institutional and residential projects. Among them, only

commercial projects that are developed by private investors who have some development intention of public use are selected as cases in this study. The reason is that these commercial projects share a common development model. In this model, the interests of most main roles, including the government, the private sector and the public, have to be taken into account. The production process of a project is one focus of this dissertation. Compared with other kinds of projects, the production processes of those commercial projects might be more complicated since more roles and interests are involved. In order to find out more useful rules and experiences, we would emphasize on a more complex situation. It is hoped that a study based on more complicated conditions could be easier applied in other less complex situations.

Miscellaneous: The impact on urban life is also considered during case selection. The projects that are selected are supposed to have a comparably big impact on people's life. Since one aim of these projects is to serve the public, more people have the chance to experience those projects compared to some private projects. In addition, the investigations on projects with public use purpose could provide more opportunities to further continue the research towards other directions such as evaluation and perceptions, for which the comments and experience of the public might be an important information resource. Both of the above considerations also justify the selection.

1.3.2 Roles Analysis

The production process of each selected case is examined separately. After the processes are formulated, further analysis would be given. In order to achieve a deep understanding

of the kind of forces and the way they affect the outcomes, analysis of roles representing different interests are made. The following three roles are emphasized:

Government role: In Singapore, the government is quite influential on many aspects of the country, including the urban forms. In this country, the government has the tradition of maintaining a strong and pervasive presence in the social and economic lives of its people. It is willing and powerful enough to implement tough but pragmatic policies that are considered to be in the national interest. The government's policy can be implemented effectively within its one-level administration system. During implementation, the government's interests could be fully represented by its agents. In the production processes of the projects studied, the role of government is mainly played by the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA). In the current context of Singapore, URA not only plays the role as government agent, but also acts as some professionals such as planners and urban designers.

Private roles: *The land and property development process is the vehicle through which the built environment is produced.* ⁶ The private role as investors is important in the production process of a project. The policies of government have to be implemented by these private roles, while during such implementation, the private role is also involved in some decision making process. *If design is understood as the process of choosing possible form, we may conclude that many decisions that are made by investors, surveyors and developers before a designer is involved, are all design decisions,*

⁶ Ibid. p120

*affecting the form of the property and the urban space it helps to produce.*⁷ Aiming at seeking profit most of the time, private role can represent interests of the market, to some extent. The force of market should never be neglected on the aspect of forming urban space. In this dissertation, the developers are selected as the main representative of private roles.

Professional roles: It is professionals who decide exactly what forms the built environment would take. Many professionals would get involved in this decision making process such as economists, planners, urbanists, architects, structure engineers and contractors. However in Singapore, the functions of some professionals are executed by the government agents. Most of time, the government agent completes the work from policy making to urban design before handing the project to private sectors and other professionals. In this dissertation, architects are considered to play the main professional role because of the significance of their position and their responsibility in the work subsequent to urban design.

1.4 Outlining the study

There are mainly five parts in this study. Part one is introduction. Some basic information about this study would be briefly introduced. The scope of this study is limited to particular aspects of specific projects. In part two, the projects studied are deemed as a kind of urban renewal practice. The specific context of Singapore is also reviewed in this part. Part three elaborates the production processes of selected cases. How they take their

⁷ Ibid.

current shapes would be explained in detail. In part four, some key roles in the production processes are identified. The specific characters of these roles and their actual performances in these production processes are analyzed synthetically. Finally, the conclusion is given and the future work is discussed in part five,

1.5 Scope and limitations of the study

As an urban phenomenon, blending of old and new could be studied in various ways from viewpoints of politics, economic, society, history, culture and technology. In this dissertation, it is studied mainly from perspectives of society and politics. The scope of blending is limited by the scale of projects, which might cover one or more city blocks. However, the blending at a larger scale such as city districts is not discussed yet. Focusing on projects, the main investigation is related to the production processes and the performances of various roles involved in these processes. Therefore, the limitations of this study would come from its narrow focus on the production processes of specific kind of projects; however, it is hoped that this specific study would yield some understandings about the built environment in a larger scope. The selection of cases also limits the findings within the specific cases. Hence, it is also expected that the findings based on a more complicated and more common development model of Singapore could be applied in other situations.

Although selected cases were developed at different times, it is not a strictly, continuously progressive process if the development processes of these cases are linked together. Because all these projects are still at an experimental stage, some overlapping or even retrogressing might also happen. Since the focus of this study is on the production

process, the fields related to evaluation mostly remain untouched. Some general comments are made in order to get a better understanding about the production process. Not much effort is spent on the aspects of what Lefebvre called “representational spaces”, which is a space *as directly lived through its associated images and symbols, and hence the space of ‘inhabitants’ and ‘users’*.⁸ It is also not our scope to judge the success of these projects in common sense. Although we give some comments on the final results of these projects; most of those comments are related to a much wider range of concerns including not only physical form but also commercial aspects, political aspects and social aspects. Rather than making judgments about these projects on design or usage issues only, we are more concerned with is that how the production processes of these projects could be improved. The main intention, as mentioned earlier, is to distill some lessons from past experience so as to benefit the future practice.

⁸ Lefebvre, *The Production of Space*. p39

Chapter Two Urban Renewal in Context

In this dissertation, cases containing both conservation and new constructions are studied as a trend of Singapore's urban renewal. In this chapter, first of all, comparative history of urban renewal in western countries is reviewed. Then the definition of urban renewal adopted in this dissertation is proposed. Finally, the basic urban renewal process of Singapore is examined.

2.1 Urban Renewal

Slum clearance could be seen as the beginning of urban renewal in America. The term "urban renewal" first obtained its official definition in the national Housing Act of 1949 in America. In fact, this idea had been developed in the United States from the 1930s, as an issue directly related to certain slum clearance and public housing projects.⁹ Old slums were replaced by thousands of new structures and those new structures were called urban renewal projects. This renewal programme had two innovations: the use of eminent domain to acquire and clear land for private reuse; and a direct subsidy on the cost of land.¹⁰ These two innovations had fully shown the main intention of this renewal programme. Though the Act was named "Housing", the main concern was mainly utilizing the urban land instead of aiding the dwellers in slums. Land was acquired and cleared by the government while developments mainly relied on private developers.

⁹ Konstantinos Apostolou Doxiades and National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials., *Urban Renewal and the Future of the American City* (Chicago: Public Administration Service, 1966). p.8

¹⁰ Heywood T.Sanders, "Urban Renewal and the Revitalized City: A Reconsideration of Recent History," in *Urban Revitalization*, ed. Donald B. Rosenthal (London: Sage Publications, 1980).

Driven by market demand, most developers preferred projects with instant return on capital and their choice had already rested outside the government's authority. In many cases, when big developers wanted more space, they would go to the suburb to find an urban renewal project in order to get rid of limitations from social and cultural aspects. Areas suitable for luxury housing were rebuilt quickly; rich people began to move for better houses to the suburban with wealth and resources while new slums appeared in the city centre. Therefore, on the one hand, urban renewal programmes were conducted one after another; on the other hand, the living conditions of original dwellers in the cleared slums were largely neglected. By 1960, more than 800 urban renewal projects, ranging from small ones relating only to several families to big ones containing more than 10,000 families, had been completed. But the living conditions of the people who previously resided in the slums did not improve much. Although slums were demolished and replaced by housing, most of these new houses were only affordable for middle and upper-income families, and the burden of the lower-income families were heavier after the renewal.¹¹

Criticism rose and gradually spread all over the country. From the middle of 1950s, the government had made a series of legislative adjustments to emphasize more on residences for low and moderate income families. First, the Congress required housing projects specific for those families in 1966. After that, in 1967, the Secretary of the Department of Housing and Urban Development stated three goals¹² for urban renewal

¹¹ Martin Anderson, *The Federal Bulldozer ; a Critical Analysis of Urban Renewal, 1949-1962* (Cambridge: M.I.T. Press, 1964).

¹² Three goals: 1 the conservation and expansion of the housing supply for low-and moderate-income families; 2 the development of centers of employment for the jobless, the underemployed and lower-income persons; and 3 projects

programme which gave the programme a clear social responsibility. Such statement was so significant that the entire urban renewal programme had been divided into two stages by the statement. Before 1967, local authorities and private developers had more choices for project selection and development; but after 1967, the federal dictation took more part in this programme. The effort of federal government did positively affect the implementation of the programme. Before 1967, the average project provided 47% of its new housing area to lower-income people while this figure had increased to 65% after 1967.¹³

Another concern was the decaying of inner city. This problem was partially caused by the early urban renewal programme. Rich people moved out to suburban area together with tax resources, and poor people were left in old city, which might continue to happen in some areas today. Some policy adjustments were made. *In addition to relocating the slum dwellers in “decent, safe, and sanitary” housing, the programme also intended to stimulate large-scale private rebuilding, add new tax revenues to the dwindling coffers of the cities, revitalize their downtown areas, and halt the exodus of middle-class to the suburbs*¹⁴. In addition, in one of the three goals stated in 1967, projects serving areas of *physical decay, high tensions, and great social need*¹⁵ were also announced as one focus of future urban renewal programme.

This urban renewal programme under the name of slum clearance and redevelopment was officially dismissed in 1974. But the actual renewal process still continued. From the

serving areas of “physical decay, high tensions, and great social need” T.Sanders, "Urban Renewal and the Revitalized City: A Reconsideration of Recent History."

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ James Q. Wilson, *Urban Renewal ; the Record and the Controversy* (Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1966). p.537.

¹⁵ T.Sanders, "Urban Renewal and the Revitalized City: A Reconsideration of Recent History."

1970s, redevelopment or revitalization of the built environment, especially the inner city, became one main task of American urban renewal.

Urban renewal in Europe seems to lag a few years behind America. In the beginning of 1960s, most of European countries launched urban renewal as a national programme while the Housing Act had begun to work in America in 1949. In fact, the situation in Europe was much more complicated than America and the driving forces also differed. Housing problem was also an important motivation. The interests of people who lived in bad conditions were the main concern of urban renewal policies in many countries such as Sweden, France, and Germany. Especially in Britain, housing problem had emerged since the Industrial Revolution. Many of these countries had begun its slum clearance before the World War II. Besides housing problem, the invasion of automobiles brought great pressure to European cities. With a more traditional city pattern as compared to America, large scale adaptive work was required to solve the traffic problem.¹⁶ In addition, the reconstruction of war-damaged cities was another important component of European urban renewal.

Demolition and reconstruction was the main content of European urban renewal till the middle 1970s. But the direction changed after the oil crisis happened in 1973 when it became hard to conduct large scale new constructions. Maintenance, repair and renovation work became important content of urban renewal in many countries after 1973. Because of the economic recession, urban renewal was used as a stimulus for building

¹⁶ Leo Grebler, *Urban Renewal in European Countries: Its Emergence and Potentials*, City Planning Series. (Philadelphia: : University of Pennsylvania Press, 1964).

activity¹⁷ to give an impulse to the economy of cities, conservation, “cautious” and “soft” urban renewal became hot terms.

From the 1980s, urban redevelopment became the new focus of urban renewal. It concerns more or less hard design adaptation of existing cities to changed circumstances—namely, in both shrinking and growing urban regions.¹⁸ The reacquisition of public spaces that had been claimed by car traffic, the orientation of the city towards the water, large-scale arts complexes for the rejuvenation of dilapidated areas and so on became important subjects of the urban redevelopment.¹⁹ The Architectural Biennial in Venice in 1980 could be regarded as a beginning of this new trend.

The information era came in the 1990s. Intensive use of new technologies such as internet and mobile phone made people aware of developments anywhere in the world instantly. The entire world has been connected to a huge network. People can get what they want directly without local or regional constraints since resources are shared by the whole world, in the meantime, the scale and degree of competitions between countries and regions are enlarged and deepened. In this circumstance, a city requires a more competitive position with respect to others to attract more resources from all over the world in this era. The significance of redevelopment continues to increase since local authorities often initiate these projects to bring the city more attraction and positive

¹⁷Hugo Priemus et al., *Urban Renewal Policy in a European Perspective : An International Comparative Analysis*, Rev. ed., *Housing and Urban Policy Studies* ; 5. (Delft, Netherlands: : Delft University Press, 1992). p 18.

¹⁸ Matthias Boeckl, *Stadtumbau = Urban Conversion : Recent International Examples*, Edition Architektur Aktuell ; 04. (Wien: Springer, 2003).p16.

¹⁹ Ibid, p18.

impetus.²⁰ Redevelopment has become a worldwide trend though different measures are applied in different situations. Hence, project blending both old and new appears as one kind of these redevelopment practices which can enhance the charm of the city. The old component can provide attractions on cultural and historical aspects while the new one could cater for the demand of markets. As early as 1980s, projects blending old and new already appeared in United Kingdom. The Italian House in Merchant City is an example. It was constructed in the middle of 1980s. In this project, the façades of old buildings were conserved and new structures were built behind them. The Brindleyplace, Birmingham, is another example at a scale of districts. The redevelopment of the 17 acre site started in 1993. While historical buildings were conserved or adapted for new use, new buildings were constructed. Similar projects also appeared in Australia such as the Melbourne Central Station and Le Meridien at Rialto hotel. In Asia, the Xintiandi in Shanghai is a typical project of this kind. In an area of 30 thousands square meters, old buildings were conserved and adapted for commercial and luxury residential use while some new buildings were inserted. All the examples aforementioned demonstrated that projects combining both old and new had been adopted as a way of redevelopment or urban renewal for old city areas.

2.2 Definition—two approaches

The original meaning of the term “urban renewal” was closely related to the housing reform when it first emerged in America. It mainly referred to “the redevelopment or

²⁰ Marjolein Spaans, *The Implementation of Urban Revitalization Projects : An International Comparison, Housing and Urban Policy Studies*, 20. (Delft: DUP Science, 2002),p16.

rehabilitation of the older parts of towns and cities”²¹. In practice, it often meant the displacement of an existing low-income population, creating space for more profitable offices, commercial and luxury residential development or the provision of transport facilities,²² mainly in the context of America.

The significance of the term “urban renewal” kept rising with the huge change that occurred in the second half of last century when more concerns turned to this field, such as policy, culture, and society. One reason is that as more people lived in towns and cities, urban areas became larger and older which led to inevitable changes of city fabric. The scope of urban renewal has been greatly broadened in such circumstance. The following extensions were occasionally used in literature, ‘urban regeneration’, ‘urban recovery’, ‘urban renaissance’, or ‘urban revival’. Many labels with different but related meanings made the original meaning of “urban renewal” ambiguous and imprecise.

Although there is no unanimous definition, two major streams could be discerned from the whole conceptualizing process of urban renewal.²³

The first stream focused on the evolutionary **process** of urban area. Urban renewal is a dynamic and successive process here. Urban areas are also changing, either expanding or contracting, in response to economic and social changes.

The spatial and sector changes in demand for land and buildings lead to the intensification of use in some areas, a reduction of density in others, in some cases to

²¹ Michael S. Gibson and Michael J. Langstaff, *An Introduction to Urban Renewal, Built Environment Series*. (London: : Hutchinson, 1982).p 12.

²² J.B.Cullingworth, *New Towns for old: the problems of Urban Renewal*, Fabian Research Series No. 229, quoted by Michael S. Gibson in “*An introduction to Urban Renewal*”, p12.

²³ Kian Koon Choo, “Urban Renewal Planning for City-States : A Case Study of Singapore” (1989). P80-p126

*refurbishment and perhaps a change in the use of a building, in another case to demolition and reconstruction, and in a few cases to the abandonment of buildings, vacancy and dereliction...Inasmuch as these changes affect the physical structure and fabric of urban areas it is regarded here as a process which we shall call 'urban renewal'...urban renewal is seen as the physical change, or change in the use or intensity of use of land and buildings, that is the inevitable outcome of the action of economic and social forces upon urban areas.*²⁴

The view noted by Chris Couch, was based on this process orientation. According to this approach, urban renewal, as a successive progress, co-existed with the city itself from the very beginning.

The second approach deems the urban renewal as a specific **programme**. Instead of a successive process, urban renewal here consisted of a series of programmes. This approach was first expressed by Miles L. Colean in the early 1950s. He summarized nine-point comprehensive urban renewal programmes of “positive and correlated action” from the “removal of the obstacles” to the “continuous cycle of renewal”²⁵. Another typology emphasize more on social issues. Urban renew programmes are regarded as self-conscious projects and market leading projects. While the market-leading projects is a kind of separated promotional activity premised on careful research about who will be its

²⁴ Chris Couch, *Urban Renewal : Theory and Practice* (London : Macmillan Education, 1990). P1

²⁵ Miles L. Colean, *Renewing Our Cities*, (New York: the Twentieth century Fund, 1953) p.97. He also described the obstacles as “...Environmental handicaps must be removed, traffic problems must be resolved, obsolete political forms must be changed to meet the realities of the modern urban aggregation, difficulties in assembling land for new building must be reduced, racial tensions must be abated, deterrents to new investment must be overcome, all in order that the older areas may be replaced and the vitality of the city preserved.”

customers²⁶, the self-conscious projects mainly refer to those projects with a larger vision of the whole city or even country. In the middle of 1990s, Jon Lang provided a new taxonomy for urban renewal as programmes. According to Jon Lang's taxonomy, there are mainly three kinds of urban renewal projects after the World War II namely: city rebuilding, slum clearance and built site redevelopment. *The first involves rebuilding those cities of the world devastated by bombing and/or artillery attacks. The second involves the purchase of buildings and land, the removal of the use and inhabitants of that land, the demolition and clearance of the land and the building of the site. It has often gone under the name "slum clearance". The third has simply involved extensive sites abandoned by their inhabitants and made available by their owners for redevelopment.*²⁷ Most of the urban renewal programmes could be classified into these three categories yet many other cases would have combined characters.

Within the two approaches of urban renewal mentioned above, we adopt the approach of programme in this dissertation, namely we also deem urban renewal as programmes. Jon Lang's taxonomy is also followed in this study. In his three kinds of urban renewal projects, the first one, city rebuilding is mainly referring to the cities partly or completely destroyed by irresistible natural or destructive forces such as wars, earthquakes or hurricanes. Beirut after the Lebanon War is a city in such situation. Hence, the reconstruction of Beirut Central District is one of the typical war recovery urban renewal projects.²⁸ The second kind, slum clearance, is the oldest kind among the three. In most situations, it is related to certain housing policy reform. The urban renewal programme

²⁶ Lawrence J. Vale, "Imaging after Lynch," (Department of Urban Studies and Planning, MIT, 1999).

²⁷ Jon T. Lang, *Urban Design : The American Experience* (New York: : Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1994).p9.

²⁸ See Appendix 1.

in American from 1949 to 1974 is one of the best examples. The third kind, built site redevelopment, comprises a major part of today's urban renewal practice. Since all of these redevelopments happen on a "built site", a large number of them gather in old city centre, or inner city, where the most outdated "built sites" are located. The Canal Front urban renewal programme in Brussels is an example of this kind²⁹. All of the cases studied in this dissertation also belong to the third kind of Jon Lang's taxonomy: built site redevelopment. Just like most other projects of this kind, all of the cases are situated in the old city centre and had been redeveloped. They would be examined as a specific stream of this "built site redevelopment" according to their own characteristics.

2.3 Urban renewal in context of Singapore

In Singapore, slum clearance could be seen as the starting point of urban renewal, just as the case in most western countries. But it followed another path which was determined by the particular circumstance of its own.

In the middle of the last century, the deteriorating housing conditions spread in the nation. Except for some suburban residential developments in the form of terraced and semi-detached houses, most residential in Singapore were shop-house buildings, all densely populated and packed together. On about 1 per cent of the island's land area, the old city of less than 600 hectares accommodated about 360,000 people, which approximated one-third of the total population.³⁰ The living conditions in the packed shop-houses were

²⁹ See Appendix 1.

³⁰ Ole Johan Dale, *Urban Planning in Singapore : The Transformation of a City*, *South-East Asian Social Science Monographs*. (Shah Alam, Selangor: Oxford University Press, 1999), p.231.

described by Barrington Kaye³¹ as “*The majority of these were divided internally on the first and second floors, into small cubicles; each may be housing a family of 7 or more people... Many of them sleep on the floor, often under the bed. Their possessions are in boxes, placed on shelves to leave the floor free for sleeping. Their food is kept in the tiny cupboards, which hang from the rafters. Their clothes hang on the walls, or from racks. Those who cannot even afford to rent a cubicle may live in a narrow bunk, often under the stairs*”³². (Figure 2-1)

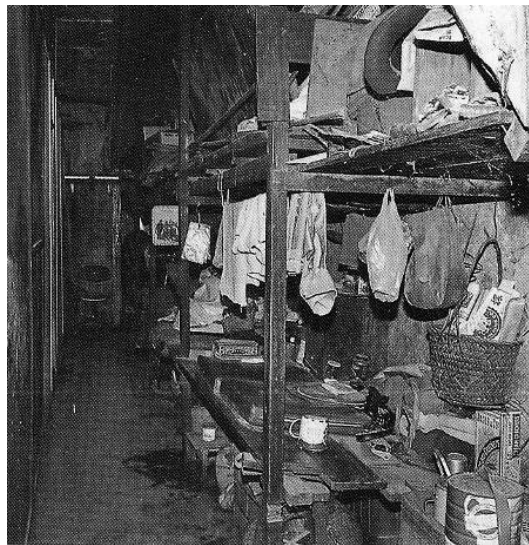


Figure 2-1: Typical living cubicle
(Source: Chinatown: An Album of Singapore Community)

According to this study report, over half (56%) of the inhabitants of the Upper Nankin Street³³ lived in households occupying a single cubicle; 7% are obliged to share a cubicle with another household; and 4% have no other accommodation than the whole, or part, of a bunk-place. There are also 103 persons who have only a ‘moving’ space, usually a

³¹Barrington Kaye, *Upper Nankin Street, Singapore : A Sociological Study of Chinese Households Living in a Densely Populated Area* (Singapore: : University of Malaya Press, 1960)..

³² Ibid.p 2.

³³ Upper Nankin Street, a street located in the heart of the traditional central area.

camp-bed set up in the storeroom.³⁴ An investigation³⁵ conducted immediately after the World War II showed that about 300,000 people were “*herded into about 1,000 acres in the heart of the city...and with numbers of large blocks of houses, often back to back, with densities of 1,000 or more to the acre*” Even the streets were used as the extension of temporary housing. The streets became dining room, laundry room, living room, storage room and so on.

In the World War II, the housing conditions further deteriorated due to the reduction in the housing stock and constantly population increase . The big inflow of immigrants and the high birth-rates in the 1950s accelerated the deteriorating process. The Rent Control Act of 1947 also had negative impact on the housing deterioration. The original intention of this act was to protect tenants from unfair rental by controlling the rental officially, but this act somehow discouraged the landlords to maintain their properties. To improve the quality of housing and basic social services became one of the most urgent tasks of Singapore at the end of 1950s.

Except housing, industry was another development emphasis of Singapore in the middle of last century. The Economic Development Board was founded in 1961 and Singapore's industrialization programme began with the construction of factories producing garments, textiles, toys, wood products and hair wigs. New industrial sites were planned including Jurong area and other smaller sites as well as new towns near them. All these properties needed population support.

³⁴ Kaye, *Upper Nankin Street, Singapore : A Sociological Study of Chinese Households Living in a Densely Populated Area*.p66.

³⁵ This investigation was conducted by Housing Committee. See Tai-Chee Wong and Adriel Lian-Ho Yap, *Four Decades of Transformation : Land Use in Singapore, 1960-2000* (Singapore: Eastern University Press, 2004). p12.

The reality Singapore faced were an overcrowded central area on the one hand, and the insufficiently populated new properties on the other hand. It was this situation that made the government take action. In the 1958 Master Plan, the government expressed the intention of decentralizing its population. The aim was to reduce the gross residential density of the central area from 900 persons per hectare to 750 while the total population would increase from 1,120,000 in 1955 to 1,947,000 in 1972.³⁶

To decentralize the population, there had to be suitable, good, low-cost public housing for relocated families that lived in the slums to be cleared³⁷. Therefore, under the Housing and Development Ordinance in 1959, a public housing agency, Housing and Development Board (HDB)³⁸, was founded. One of the four functions that were defined to HDB was “clearance and redevelopment of slum areas”

High rise and high density were determined as the prime housing policy from this era. It was decided by the particular situation of Singapore. As a city-state located on a small island with an area of less than 700 square kilometers, land is the one of the most valuable resources. Another reason was to reduce the potential obstacle of land acquisition since at that time, to acquire a large-scale land for public housing was difficult because related legal systems had not been set up. The obstacles of land acquisition were eventually cleared by the Land Acquisition Act in 1966.

The first batch of HDB housings were built within 8 kilometers from the central area considering that most of the people in need still worked in central area. At a time without

³⁶ Dale, *Urban Planning in Singapore : The Transformation of a City*.p117

³⁷ Ibid. p126

³⁸ Choo, "Urban Renewal Planning for City-States : A Case Study of Singapore".p 35.

effective mass transportation system, the travel fee prevented these people from moving too far away. By 1965, over 50,000 units of housing had been provided to the people who moved out from the central area. Not only housing, but also related facilities were built near the public housing, and these helped reduce people's dependence on the central area. HDB also tried to build some other settlement located further than 8 kilometers away from the central area. The construction of Queenstown commenced during that time.

By 1970, the central area population had been reduced from 360,000 in 1957 to 241,300. During the same period, the national population had increased from 1,455,900 to 2,075,000.³⁹ These figures showed that population decentralization had been successfully achieved.

When population distribution was no longer the most urgent problem, the significance of another issue rose, i.e. providing space for economic activities. In 1971, the government adopted a new concept plan. In this plan, a financial district was envisaged in central area. In the pursuit of Central Business District (CBD), the government's role had changed from a "strong regulator" to a "low enforcement agency".⁴⁰ This concept plan marked the beginning of the second phase of Singapore urban renewal: central area redevelopment. This phase was characterized by rapid development of central area in the next 15 years. Within a series of redevelopment measures, the Sale of Sites Programme was introduced as a key implementation tool. It was envisaged that substantial private investment and

³⁹ Dale, Ole Johan, op.cit. p127

⁴⁰ Wong and Yap, *Four Decades of Transformation : Land Use in Singapore, 1960-2000*. p20.

employment opportunities would be generated, both during construction and after, by this new strategy.⁴¹

The objective concerning the Sale of Sites Programme was expressed by URA. As one of the primary objectives of the authority in its urban redevelopment, this programme aimed to built a city characterized by architecturally well-designed buildings, each unique in its own way and contributing to enhancing the urban fabric of the city. This objective had led to the authority's insistence on high quality architectural schemes in tenders in its sale of sites.⁴² This Sale of Sites Programme caused intensive construction in the central area especially in the CBD of Singapore and contributed much to the change of built environment of Singapore. A number of developments rose in this period: DBS Building (1975), OCBC Tower (1976), Raffles City (1984), Marina Centre (1984), Chartered Banking Building(1984), Treasury Building (1986), Overseas Union Bank Centre (1988). By the middle of 1980s, nearly 60 projects had been completed providing approximately over 380,000 and 420,000 square meters of new shopping and office space, and 2000 hotel rooms within the central area.⁴³

Having experienced the phases of slum clearance and resettlement in the 1960s and intensive redevelopment in the CBD in the 1970s, the emphasis of urban renewal programme began to move to conservation and historic preservation from the middle of 1980s, and the third phase of Singapore urban renewal started. The 1985 economic recession made URA halt the land sale strategy in its existing format and sharply curtail

⁴¹ Ibid.

⁴² URA *Annual Report 1980/1981*, p5.

⁴³ URA *Annual Report 1983/1984*, p21

work in progress on sale of site projects under construction.⁴⁴ *The oversupply of commercial facilities in mid-1980, combined with the tourism needs and the release of land safeguarded and largely acquired for public housing, led to an acceptance of conservation of old shop-houses.*⁴⁵ In fact in the earlier urban renewal stages, the issue of conservation had been ignored. Both the politicians and administrators tended to regard the shop-houses as symbols of underdevelopment rather than potential resources. Similar viewpoint was noted by Soh Hiap Chin as: *conservation will in most places certainly retard economic growth and undermine social progress. Although it is easily admitted that in the progress history is impoverished. But again it has been argued you cannot eat the old stuff.*⁴⁶

The shift in renewal conceptualization had been forecasted in in the late 1960s. Dale had quoted some papers presented by an officer of urban renewal programme as: *contrary to misinformed belief, urban renewal dose not mean just the pulling down of slum sections and rebuilding on the cleared area. There are actually three indispensable elements of urban renewal: conservation, rehabilitation and rebuilding*'.⁴⁷ But the opportunity for launching large conservation programme did not come until the mid 1980s. The economic development slowed down its step and the tourist arrivals also dropped, which made the citizens think more about the meaning of the old city. Disappointment towards the city rose in public, as a critics noted *Singapore was merely becoming another modern*

⁴⁴ Choo, Kian Koon, op.cit. p368

⁴⁵ Dale, Ole Johan, op.cit. p134

⁴⁶ Soh Hiap Chin, "Conservation: Beauty and Truth," *Singapore Institute of Architects Journal* 132, no. Sep/Oct (1985).

⁴⁷ Dale, Ole Johan, op.cit. p123.

*metropolis... we had paid inadequate attention to our city heritage which found expression in the architecture of old buildings and land marks.*⁴⁸

However, by this time, many historical buildings with outstanding social value had already been demolished without sufficient consideration including the Coleman's House, which was built in 1829 and demolished in 1969, the Law Courts, which was built in 1884 and demolished in 1975, and the Adelphi Hotel, which was built in 1904 and demolished in 1980. Areas of old shop-houses gave way to high-rise towers. The urban fabric had changed a lot.

The government made quick responses to the public concern. In 1986, the Conservation Master Plan was made and two years later, the Master Plan for the Civic and Cultural District emerged. In 1989, ten areas were designated by URA as conservation area including China Town and Little India. Strict guidelines were made to protect the historical building and the area atmosphere.

In this batch of actions, the main initial objective was to meet the needs of tourism. But apart from the needs of tourism, another issue which also should be recognized was the pressure from the economic development. Though the historical buildings and areas have their special value in the meaning of cultural or social aspects, most of them are already outdated in the economic function. The conflict of the old fabric and the new requirements of modern society became one of the basic dilemmas of the old areas. This conflict becomes even more obvious with the emergence of the economic globalization.

⁴⁸ Brenda S. A. Yeoh and Lily Kong, *Portraits of Places : History, Community and Identity in Singapore* (Singapore: : Times Editions, 1995). p25.

In this situation, a new kind of renewal could provide a pragmatic way: to redevelop these areas with both conservation and new construction. In this dissertation, we call this kind of redevelopment as projects blending old and new. Those redevelopments were seen as real estate products but at the same time they could contain some conservation. In fact from the late 1980s, URA had begun to search for opportunities to implement projects blending old and new as a new renewal form. By introducing the new buildings into historic districts, more spaces could be gained to cater for the increasing market demand and some heritage could also be conserved. The label of revitalizing was added on this kind of renewal practice which was one of the indispensable elements of urban renewal. Several projects of this kind were constructed. The first project was Bugis Village. It was built just after conservation issues began to rise in Singapore. In early projects of this kind, besides restoration of old parts, the new parts often had similar appearances with the old. In many cases, the new parts were built as extensions of the old parts such as Lavender Place⁴⁹, Nos. 299 to 309 Joo Chiat Road⁵⁰, and the Asian Civilization Museum⁵¹. When pure extension could not provide enough space, more new constructions had to be introduced as separate buildings. Projects containing both conservations and new buildings became the majority of this kind of projects although some extension work still continued in some smaller scale projects such as the No. 24 Nassim Road⁵² and the Central Fire Station⁵³ which were built around 2000. After new buildings were introduced, the way of blending also diversified. Applying similar appearance was just a choice of the earlier projects, e.g. Bugis Village. Pure juxtaposition

⁴⁹ See Appendix 2

⁵⁰ Ibid

⁵¹ Ibid

⁵² Ibid

⁵³ Ibid

was another way of blending which was applied later. In some condominium projects, some historical buildings were conserved and adaptively re-used with high-rise residential buildings standing around, such as Torieview Mansions⁵⁴ and Spring Grove⁵⁵. A most popular way of blending might be combination. The old and the new were supposed to be integrated into a whole scheme to form particular atmosphere by proper adaptation and design methodology. This concept was widely adopted in many projects. The first trial was Bugis Junction and Yue Hwa building⁵⁶, both of which were completed in the middle of 1990s. They were followed by a batch of projects including Grand Plaza Parkroyal⁵⁷, Central Mall, Capital Square⁵⁸, Far East Square, and Hotel Rendezvous⁵⁹. Some residential projects also applied similar methodology such as Gambier Court⁶⁰, The Lotus at Joo Chiat⁶¹, and the Sandalwood⁶².

Nowadays, projects of blending old and new has become an important trend of Singapore urban renewal since 1990s. They are also the main study object of this dissertation. Five projects are selected as cases to be further studied. They were built from the 1990 to 1999. Tracing the processes of these cases, which is the main scope of next chapter, could provide a more comprehensive vision of Singapore's urban renewal process.

⁵⁴ Ibid

⁵⁵ Ibid

⁵⁶ Ibid

⁵⁷ Ibid

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ Ibid

⁶⁰ Ibid

⁶¹ Ibid

⁶² Ibid

Chapter Three From Bugis Village to China Square Central

In Singapore, the projects combining both old and new components developed tremendously in recent years as a stream of urban renewal. “Old” here refers to conservation and “new” relates to newly built structures. Through combination, the old structure can be conserved while the new structure can provide more spaces and services. From 1990s, several developments of this kind have been built in Singapore. In this chapter, some of them will be examined.

Since conservation is included, most of these projects are located in the old city which directly related to central area in Singapore. The definition of central area we adopted in this thesis was given in 1980 Master Plan. (Figure 3-1)

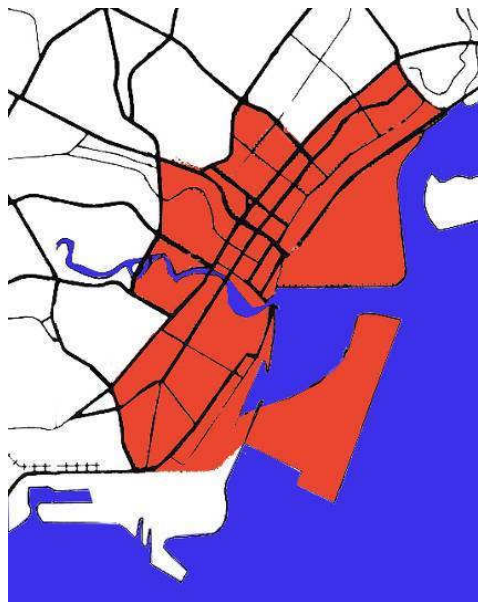


Figure 3-1: The central area in the 1980 Master Plan
(Original source: URA website; amended by the author)

In this central area, a total of 7 projects of the kind studied were built up by 2001. (Figure 3-2 and Table 3-1).



1	Bugis Village
2	Bugis Junction
3	Central Mall
4	Central Square
5	Far East Square
6	Capital Square
7	China Square Central

Figure 3-2: All completed projects of kind studied
(Original Source: URA, 2005 Map; amended by the author)

Table 3- 1: Name list

Within these projects, five of them were selected as cases in this dissertation. The basic data of these projects is shown in Table 3-2. How were those projects built and how these areas transformed into their current form? This chapter examined the production processes of these cases.

All of the five cases are studied in the following aspects: historical review, development planning, urban design, land sale, architecture design and after completion.






	Bugis Village	Bugis Junction	Central Mall	Far East Square	China Square Central
Boundaries (black lines) and conservation parts(dark areas)	 (Original source: Google Earth, amended by the author)	 (Original source: Google Earth, amended by the author)	 (Original source: Google Earth, amended by the author)	 (Original source: Google Earth, amended by the author)	 (Original source: Google Earth, amended by the author)
Year of release	1988	1990	1991	1995	1995
Year of completion	1991	1995	1997	1998	2001
Site area (Sq.M)	5489	37500	4805	14000	25015
Government agent	STPB URA	URA	URA	URA	URA
Lease	30	99	99	99	99
developer	Essen Technology Pte Ltd	Keppel Land Limited Capital Land and Seiyu	City Developments Limited	Victory Realty Co. Pte Ltd (subsidiary of Far East Org)	Merevale Holdings Pte Ltd
Architect	STPB consultant URA consultant	DP Architects	P&T Consultants	DP Architects	ADDP Architects
Conserved buildings	32 shop-houses	55 shop-houses	2 shop-houses 4 ware-houses	61 shop-houses	100 shop-houses

Table 3-2 projects facts

3.1 Case One: Bugis Village

The first case is Bugis Village.(Figure 3-3) It is located in Bugis historical area and is bounded by Queen Street, Victoria Street and Rochor Road. (Figure 3-4)

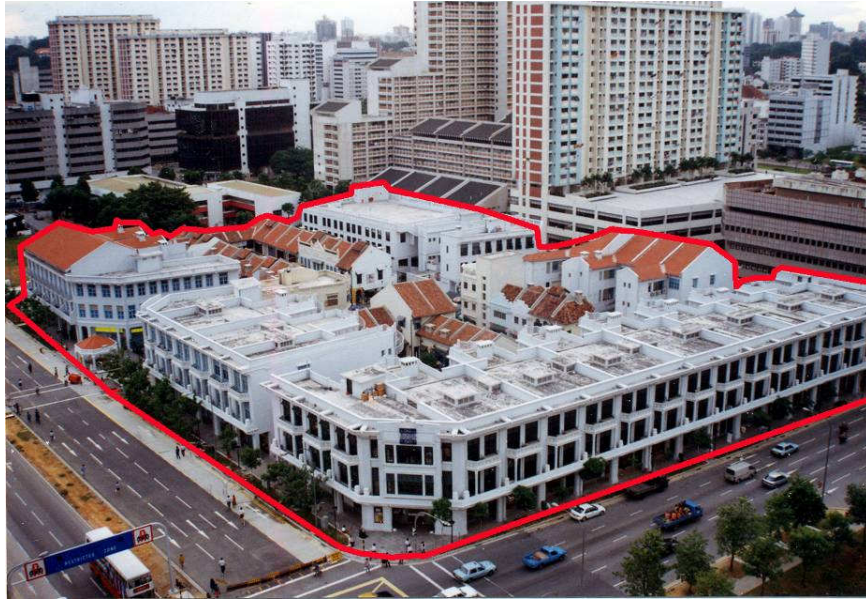


Figure 3-3 : The bird's eye view of Bugis Village
 (Source: Poh Lena, Evaluation of the New Bugis Street, amended by the author)

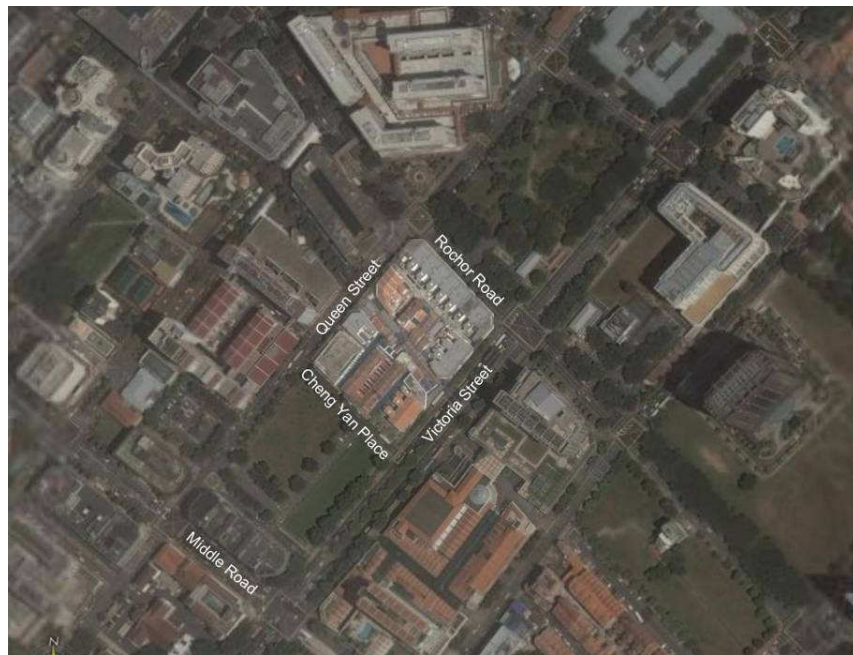


Figure 3-4: The location of Bugis Village
 (Source: Google Earth, amended by the author)

3.1.1 Historical review

The history of this area could be dated back to the 1820s. The name “Bugis” was actually the name of an ethnic group.⁶³ In 1820, Dutch took over Riau⁶⁴, which was the main settlement for Bugis people. To escape the Dutch, a brother of a prince left Riau with five hundred followers. These people finally settled down in Singapore. The area they occupied was called Kampong Bugis⁶⁵, which was situated between Rochor (Rochore) River and Kelang (Kallang) River⁶⁶.

Through time, the ethnic composition of this area changed. In the 1820s the Bugis people were the major ethnic group in Singapore. In 1824, they made up 18% of the total population⁶⁷, making it the third largest group. By 1847, The Bugis people constituted only 3.8% of the total population⁶⁸. Immigrants from China, Malay, India and Europe gradually changed the population composition of Kampong Bugis. The immigration was partially prompted by the British land use policy. In 1922, Sir Stamford Raffles put forth his intention to rearrange the ethnic composition in Kampong Bugis area.⁶⁹ In 1828, this

⁶³ The Bugis was a Malay dialect group in southern Sulawesi, Borneo and the Philippines.

⁶⁴ The area is east of today's Sumatra and west of Singapore

⁶⁵ Sue May Neoh and Brenda S. A. Yeoh, *Heritage and Enterprise in the Making of a Consumption Site in Singapore : A Case Study of Bugis Junction and Bugis Village* (1996). p39

⁶⁶ Khun Eng Kuah, "Bugis Street in Singapore Development Conservation and the Reinvention of Cultural Landscape," in *Cultural Identity and Urban Change in Southeast Asia : Interpretative Essays*, ed. William Stewart Logan, et al. (Geelong, Victoria: Deakin University Press, 1994).p174. Today, this area is bounded by Nicoll Highway, Crawford Street, Kallang Road, Sims Avenue and the Kallang Expressway. Along the northern boundary of Kampong Bugis are the lavender and Kallang MRT stations and to the south, the National Stadium and Kallang sports and recreational areas.

⁶⁷ The 1824 census showed that there were 1925 Bugis while the total Singapore population was 10683. Ibid. P174

⁶⁸ In 1847, there were 2269 Bugis people while the whole population was 59043. Siew Kong Chan, *A Study of a Street - Bugis Street : A Street of No Night* (1964). p9

⁶⁹ In a paper he wrote: *Bugis Campong- next to the Chinese your attention will be directed to the Bugis Settlers. They at present occupy the whole extent from Campong Glam to the mouth of Rochore River, but it is conceived that they may be more advantageously concentrated on the spot beyond the residence of the Sultan. In this case a part of Campong Glam, immediately adjoining the Sultan's residence, may be situated by Lieutenant Jackson who has instructions to mark out the European town in that direction* Charles Burton Buckley, *An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore : (with Portraits and Illustrations) from the Foundation of the Settlement under the Honourable the East India Company, on February 6th, 1819, to the Transfer of the Colonial Office as Part of the Colonial Possessions of the Crown on April 1st, 1867* (Singapore: Printed by Fraser & Neave, 1902). p84

area was designated as “European town” in the Raffles Town Plan paralleling with the China town and Little India. (Figure 3-5) The Bugis people were relocated and Europeans were introduced. At the same time, Chinese population kept increasing. From the late 1840s the Europeans began to move to Tanglin Area and Claymore districts to avoid the congested and unhygienic conditions. Chinese became the major group in the area. In the early 1900s, Chinese took over the whole area and subsequently began to extend to Kampong Glam area. In 1920s, most Malay people moved out from this area. By 1960s, mainly Chinese people occupied this area.⁷⁰

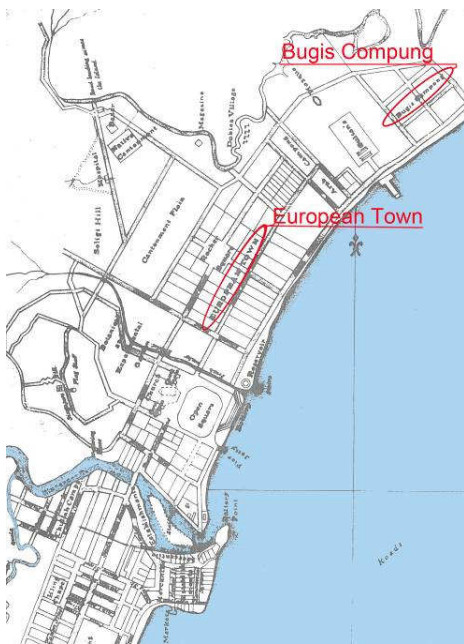


Figure 3-5: European Town in Raffles Town Plan of 1828
(Source: National Archives of Singapore, amended by the author)

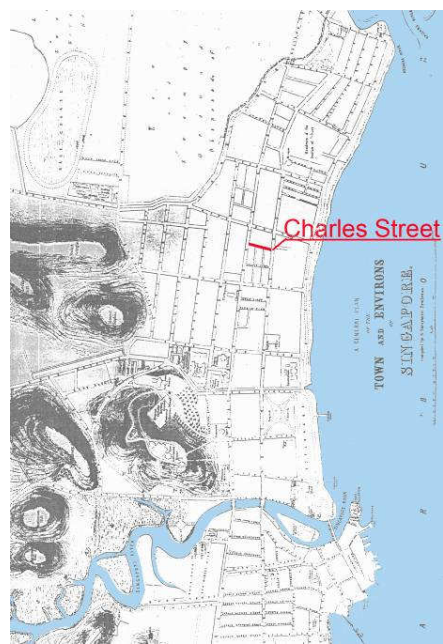


Figure 3-6: Singapore Map 1857
(Source: National Archives of Singapore, amended by the author)

⁷⁰ This situation had been noted as: *Bugis Street (a street in this area) despite its misleading name is entirely populated by Chinese with a few Indian Muslims who do some minor trades there. Malay Street, which is next to Bugis Street, does not have single Malay resident.* Chan, *A Study of a Street - Bugis Street : A Street of No Night.* p10

Historically, this area had developed its own character and hosted unique activities. There was a street named Bugis Street. It gradually developed as an activity hub of the whole area, and to some extent the whole city. As the most famous street in this area, the development of Bugis Street greatly influenced the future urban-scape and character in this area. Bugis Street first appeared on the map “A Central Plan of the Towns and Environs of Singapore” which was made by S. Narayaman, in 1857 as “Charles Street”. (Figure 3-6)

The name of this street changed from “Charles” to “Bugis” between 1857 and 1878 because on the map of Major John F. A. McNair made in 1878, the street was already named as Bugis Street.⁷¹ What triggered this name change is not clear; however, the name “Bugis” was probably applied to commemorate the Bugis people for their early settlement in earlier days.⁷²

In 1877, a brothel opened on Malay Street. It was the first brothel in this area. After the first one, a number of brothels rose. Most of them concentrated on streets around Bugis Street such as Malay Street, Malabar Street, Tan Quee Lan Street and Fraser Street.⁷³ The composition of the brothels also changed over time.⁷⁴ Surrounded by brothel streets, Bugis Street became an ideal place providing auxiliary services for the brothel industry. The brothels brought enough people to Bugis Street as it provided food, entertainment

⁷¹ Ibid., p8

⁷² Ibid. there was another explanation that the name was after Bugis people. But this explanation was not adopted here because Bugis people had already relocated before 1857.

⁷³ Ibid p16

⁷⁴ At first, this area was populated by European and the prostitutes were mostly from Europe countries such as French, Russian, Greek or Hungarian. From the early 1900s, the houses of the white prostitutes were taken over by Japanese courtesans. They brought a very different atmosphere to this area. Alec Dixon, *Singapore Patrol* (London: : Harrap, 1935). P.209-p. 218

and other services to those people. By 1930, the Bugis Street was called “Bu Ye Tian” which means heaven without night, where itinerant hawkers enjoyed a roaring business in the prosperous night market. The whole area had developed as a prosperous consuming and entertainment destination. This character was deliberately retained or even re-created when this area was redeveloped in the 1990s.

In 1930, an intensive purity campaign was organized by the Straits Government and the brothels along the streets around Bugis Street were forced to shut down.⁷⁵ After the World War II, Bugis Street resurfaced and began to flourish. Bugis Street became the favorite place for sailors and soldiers from Europe or America. In their holidays, they liked to enjoy the hawker fare and entertainment along Bugis Street. Prostitutes came back along with related activities. Compared to the 1920s, the target service population was bigger. Besides patrons attracted by the sex industry, more people came to Bugis Street just for food and other entertainment.

From 1960s transvestite parades were introduced in Bugis Street as a new element. Soon it became one of the most colorful characters of this street.⁷⁶ Besides transvestite, more services and red-light related activities brought this street a notorious international reputation and became a must-see destination for tourists. Bugis Street became the only one street in Singapore with continuous activities round the clock.⁷⁷ The 24 hour cycle was divided into three different sessions: daytime session, evening session and midnight

⁷⁵ Ibid.

⁷⁶ It was written in a travel guide that “...the main attraction though is the bevy of ‘ladies’ who prance pass tables throwing their hips from side to side, waiting for a nod or wink inviting them to a table for a drink. They dress next to nothing, and have accentuated figures. Most of these are men, naturally, but they would fool the most discerning judge...Maybe you would like a picture taken of one sitting on you lap; that can also be arranged.... ”

⁷⁷ Chan, *A Study of a Street - Bugis Street : A Street of No Night*. p36

session. Each session had its own service character. In daytime session, from 5 - 6 o'clock in the morning to 6 - 7 o'clock in the evening, Bugis Street was like any other street in Singapore: hawkers would sell breakfast in the morning and shops along the streets ran normal business till 6 or 7 o'clock. The evening session began after the shops close and end in the midnight. In this session, the whole Bugis Street turned to be a big night market where *itinerant hawkers' peddled food and their wares and curios to the people*⁷⁸. The midnight session began from midnight till the next morning. In this session, this street became a big night club for sex trade, related services and entertainments.⁷⁹

Each session had its own service target group. The first two sessions mainly provided goods and services for families and people with common consumption purposes such as food, household goods and normal entertainments. The last session, which was unique for this street, mainly catered for people leading a wild and exciting life. One point should be noted here is that for most of the time, Bugis Street was a street providing normal services and goods for most people. Besides the nightlife, this street also was characterized by its vibrant urban activities in other times of a day such as its night market and breakfast trade. This unique vibrant urban life became the emphasis of recreation in the 1990's.

⁷⁸ Kuah, "Bugis Street in Singapore Development Conservation and the Reinvention of Cultural Landscape." p176
Actually, A typical scene of this night market was record by a European sailor, who arrived there about 10 pm. It was noted as: *This sailor could not see a single European in the street at all, but only Asians, the majority of whom were Chinese: there was no open air street-side café and all he could see was hawker's stalls selling fruits and piece and sundry household goods.* Chan, *A Study of a Street - Bugis Street : A Street of No Night.* p37

⁷⁹ A typical scene of the colorful nightlife had been recalled by Pamela Lee as: *Scrambling from table to table, where little boys out to challenge naïve tourists to a game of tic-tac-toe... Firstly people seemed to sway, then they started to pound on tables. Seconds later, almost on cue, a young well-built soldier, swaying seductively to the sounds of the street, jumped on to the dining table to dance. Egged on by his companions, he started a spontaneous striptease, ending atop the little toilet building, at which stage the beautiful ladies giggled and tottered aside.* Pamela Lee, *Singapore, Tourism & Me* (Singapore: Pamela Lee Pte Ltd., 2004). P155

Besides vibrant urban activities in and around Bugis Street, some other urban forms also developed in this area. From the early 1960s, public housing development (HDB) began to encroach into this area. Middle and lower income population became the main residents of this area. Subsequently, some commercial and institutional buildings were also constructed gradually, such as the Cheng Yan Court, Rochor Centre and Albert Centre.

Bugis area as the entertainment hub and activity center had its unique position in the city. While being visited as a place of interests by tourists was one function of this area, Bugis area also played an important role in the urban life of local people. The unique history of Bugis area provided a background for people when they recalled the past and offers the reasons of conservation and re-creation in the redevelopments. It also left clues for how to conduct those redevelopments.

At the end of 1970s, this area was acquired by the government during a compulsory land acquisition movement. During this period, quite a number of sites in central area were compulsory acquired by government and all the sites studied in this dissertation are a part of them. It was the Land Acquisition Act of 1966 that empowered the government to compulsory acquire land for public purposes.⁸⁰ All the residents and business were forced to move out. Only rows of empty shop-houses were left behind. In 1985, Bugis Street was totally closed due to the construction of Bugis MRT station underneath. After the

⁸⁰ *There are two striking features of the acquisition process in Singapore. One is the sweeping nature of the power of acquisition itself, virtually unreviewable in the courts. The second is the rate of compensation (which is derisory in view of the rise in property prices). With the latest revision in the compensation amount, this is now approaching market value, while only a few years ago, there was a very wide difference between market value and compensation. See Dale, Ole Johan. Urban Planning in Singapore : The Transformation of a City, South-East Asian Social Science Monographs. Shah Alam, Selangor: Oxford University Press, 1999. p.90.*

MRT station was completed, two new projects were built in this area. One is Bugis Junction. It rose just on the site of the original Bugis Street. The other one is Bugis Village. A new street within Bugis Village was named Bugis Street to replace the previous one.

3.1.2 Development policy

The first case is Bugis Village. Bugis Village consists of two parts: the restored shop-houses at the edge and a New Bugis Street in the centre. (Figure 3-7)

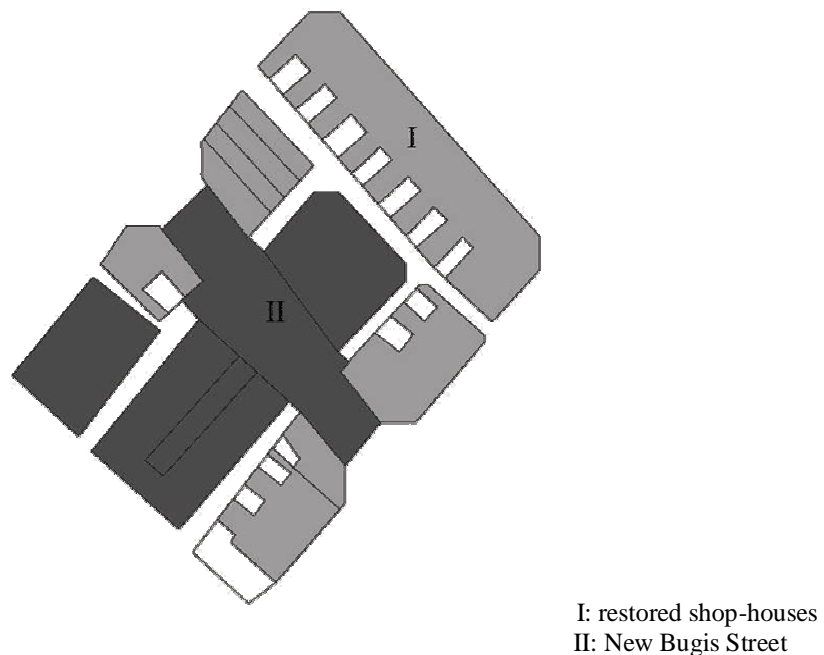


Figure 3-7: Two parts of Bugis Village

This site was acquired by the government in the beginning of 1980s, because of the MRT construction. Its strategic location, which was within fifty meters from MRT station, increased its potential for development. So URA decided not to release it in near future and leave it for big commercial developments. Conservation was not part of the

development intention at this time. From the end of 1980s, conservation issues gradually attracted more attention in Singapore. URA began to consider other possibility of shop-houses besides demolishing. Most existing shop-houses on this site were still in good condition at that time and most of them were facing main roads. If they could be restored, the urban landscape could be kept at a reasonable price. In this situation, all the shop-houses within this site were decided to be restored. Towards the other parts of the sites, big scale commercial developments were the retained land use. In the near future, only contemporary use was allowed. In this revised planning policy, this area was envisioned as a modern, big scale and possibly high rise commercial development with some conservation at the edges. To some extent the blending of old and new had been introduced at the development policy level.

When URA was making the development plan for this area, Singapore Tourist Promotion Board (STPB)⁸¹ was incubating another plan. Bugis Village was a combination of these two plans. A series of actions were taken by STPB in the mid-1980s due to a drop in tourist arrivals. The historical reputation of Bugis Street was deemed as a valuable tourism resource so that the revitalization project of Bugis street was proposed in the Tourism Product Development Plan⁸² as an important measure to boost tourism.

Another partial intention of this plan was to rescue the heritage. In fact, STPB had paid close attention to conservation from the beginning of 1980s. In 1983, the Heritage Conservation Conference was held by the Pacific Area Travel Association in Nepal. This

⁸¹ Its name was changed into Singapore Tourism Board (STB) in 1997.

⁸² It was made by STPB in 1986.

conference inspired STPB of boosting tourism by conservation.⁸³ The revitalization of Bugis Street was also regarded as a heritage rescue movement, rescuing the name, physical form (by rebuilding), and daily pulse.⁸⁴

Since the original Bugis Street had been demolished, a new alternative site was needed. The street within Bugis Village was chosen to be an ideal location for this new Bugis Street. This street was originally part of Albert Street and just opposite the original Bugis Street. (Figure 3-8:)

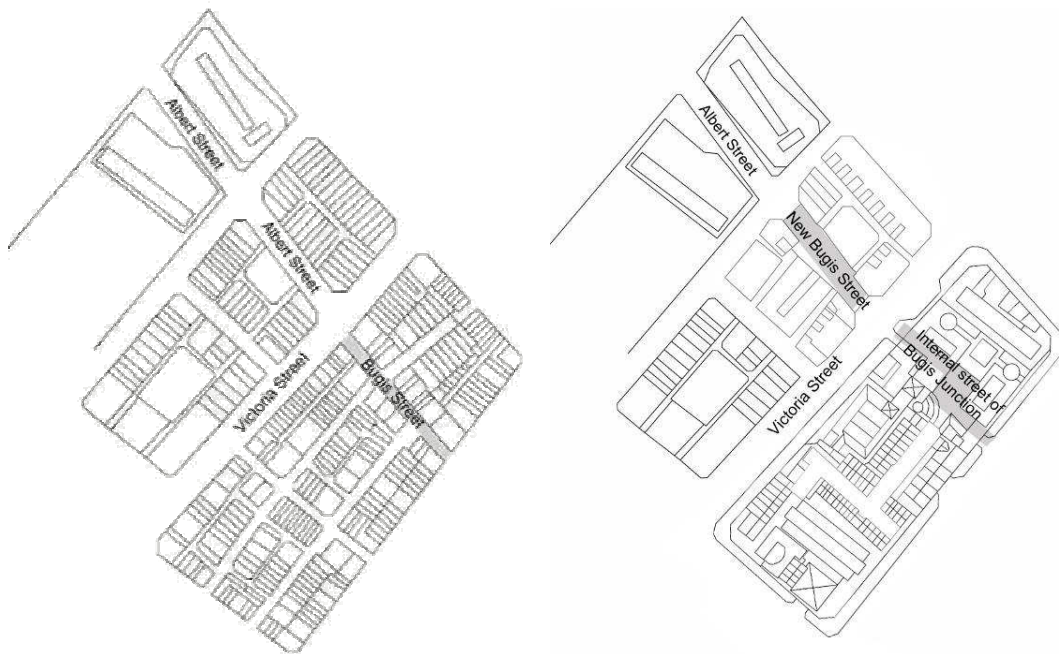


Figure 3-8: Original and replaced Bugis Street

After some negotiations, STPB took the land behind the shop-houses and a small part of the Albert Street to conduct the re-creation plan while the work of restoring shop-houses still belonged to URA.

⁸³ Lee, *Singapore, Tourism & Me*. P121

⁸⁴ Ibid. p154

3.1.3 Urban design and architectural design

Since there were two authorities involved into this project, it owned two sets of production processes. For the URA part, it was a purely restoration work. At that time, the commercial potential of conservation had not been fully recognized; conservation was considered to be a waste of money. Since it was difficult to find any private investor, URA decided to do the restoration at its own expense. So URA became the prime developer and architect for these shop-houses.

For the STPB part, the main development concept was traditional trades in newly constructed “old” buildings.⁸⁵ Based on such a concept, urban design was further developed. In urban design, a few guidelines were proposed to help create the old street atmosphere. Two and three-storey shop-houses for food and retails were stipulated from development concept level. In addition, spaces for push-carts stalls and outdoor eating were also suggested.

Architecture design was also made by STPB’s development consultant. The main design intention was to replicate old Bugis Street on this site.⁸⁶ Traditional elements such as Chinese cinema posters, old roof tiles, windows, doors, street lamps were used to create a faithfully “old” atmosphere. Old photos of Bugis street were referred to as an important design source.

⁸⁵ Poh Lena, "Evaluation of the New Bugis Street" (National University of Singapore, 1993).p. 2.

⁸⁶ Ibid.

The whole project was mainly made up of 36 restored shop-houses with the New Bugis Street through it. The first storey was used as retail and restaurant while the upper stories were used as offices and residences.

3.1.4 Land sale

All the restored shop-houses were the property of URA when they were finished. So no tender was needed for this part.

For the STPB part, the private sector was introduced. A tender was held in April, 1988 for the development (construction) and management of this part. A lease of 30 years was stipulated in the tender's conditions. At least \$4million had to be paid for the land premium. Apart from that, the developer also had to pay an annual rental to the government depending on the amount of their bid. In addition, the architecture design had to be done by STPB's consultants and the related professional fees were included in the land premium fee.⁸⁷

Eventually, Essen Technology Pte Ltd was awarded. Their main concept was to re-create the historical reputation and atmosphere of Bugis Street. They also promised to comply with the architecture design by STPB and provide a new car-park.

⁸⁷ Ibid.



Figure 3-9: Open air eating space
(Source: Poh Lena, Evaluation of the New Bugis Street)

3.1.5 After completion

The construction was launched in November, 1990. Part of Bugis Village opened from the August, 1991, excluding the New Bugis Street. (Figures 3-8 & 3-9) People were excited when it opened, and many tenants moved in eagerly. One of the tenants even paid 60 thousands dollar a month for a 140 square meters shop to run a beer bar.⁸⁸ Some people also expressed their expectation at the opening of the New Bugis Street; they said “if the New Bugis Street could open earlier, it will make this area more prosperous together with Bugis Village.”⁸⁹ This opinion was proved to be very insightful in near future.

However, the number of people consuming in this area dropped substantially after a few days of its opening. One reason was that there were not enough shelters over the open-air eating-places. When it rained, customers rushed to the corridors of the shop-houses for shelter, with many leaving the meals unfinished. Another reason was the shortage of

⁸⁸ Yang Xiangfu, "A Rental of 60thousands: Bugis Beer Garden," *Shin Min Daily News*, Dec, 28th 1991. In this article, Mr. Zhu, the boss of the bar expressed his progressive plan about this beer bar: “Anything depends on human effort. We are confident enough to handle the high rent.”

⁸⁹ "Bugis Village Opening Ceremony," *Lianhe Zaobao*, Dec, 1st 1991.

activity and advertisement after opening celebration. The tenant who was running the beer bar even had a deficit of 500 thousand dollars in nine months before he gave the shop back to its owner.⁹⁰

To change such a situation, actions were taken from the end of 1992. Since the New Bugis Street was supposed to open in 1994, it was assumed as an opportunity to promoting a revitalization plan for this whole project. In this revitalization plan, six new attractions were added. These attractions included: an “archive” corner to commemorate the old Bugis Street; a nightly cultural showcase; a function room that would be opened free of charge to associations and clubs for meetings; two new mini pubs; a huge karaoke room, and a music station that would plan patron’s requests. Another six million dollars was poured into this revitalizing programme. In addition, some shelters were provided to protect people from bad weather in the open air. More traditional activities were also added to enhance the “traditional” atmosphere. In mid-January, 1994, New Bugis Street was ready for official open.

Another important fact which helped to promote this area was the opening of Bugis Junction in 1995. This project attracted thousands of people, and many of them were willing to experience another shopping style at Bugis Village, which was just a stone’s throw away.

In addition, in the Government’s Development Guide Plan was announced in August, 1992, Bugis area was planned to be transformed into Singapore’s next prime retail and

⁹⁰Chen Kungang, "Bugis Beer Garden Has to Shut Down," *Shin Min Daily News*, Sept, 8th 1992..

tourist belt and more hotels were going to be built in this area. This plan also encouraged visitor traffic of this area.

All these measures brought a new life for this project.⁹¹ Today, most open spaces in Bugis Village are shadowed with permanent shelters. This place is characterized by its bargain goods as a locally-flavored place. Young people and tourists constitute most of the crowd. One can easily get lost and quickly recover in Bugis Village. Dark lanes, small corners, and paths that appear from nowhere build up the excitement of shopping in this little market that also takes care of hunger pangs, with its delicious snack stores and popular food-court.

3.1.6 Lessons learnt

3.1.6.1 A predominately government oriented project

This case could be seen as a government oriented project. Though the old and new was combined in one project, the old part and the new part was finished separately by two different government agents. For URA part, the restoration was completely finished by the government. From the development policy to construction and even management, no other roles were introduced.

For the STPB part, it was also a government-led project. The urban design and architecture design of the new construction was finished by STPB. Though a tender was called, the developer just bade for the right of construction and management. The lease is 30 years, which was not a typical length for private development. As a condition of

⁹¹ "Tour Operators Bring in the Crowds," *The Straits Times*, Nov, 8th 1993.

tender, the developer also had to pay an annual rental to the government. All these showed that STPB actually held most of the power over this project and what the developer could do was limited. In this situation, the process was simplified. STPB did most of things while construction and management were left to the developer. There was no complicated proposal review process at all.

In Bugis Village, the government dominated the whole development process. Most important roles in a project's development process were played by the government such as the authority, the landowner or the developer, and related professionals such as the planners, urban designers and architects. Such situation guaranteed that all the government's development policy was faithfully implemented. Each development level of the project, including the development policy making, planning, urban design, architecture design, construction and management were operated with great continuity and fully controlled by the government.

3.1.6.2 Reflection of changed attitudes towards the old

This project could be regarded as a first case that tries to blend the old and new together, though the exact meaning of blending was different from the URA's original development intention. The appearance of this project showed that the authority's attitudes towards the shop-houses had changed. Shop-houses were once the main building form in Singapore from 1810s till 1950s. Closely related to life and work, they had an important position in people's mind. However, shop-houses lost the original design intention due to the overflow of immigrants. The shortage of housing supply caused Shop-houses to be divided and sub-divided, adapted and readapted. By the 1950s, shop-houses were downgraded into slums and associated with dark, dirty, and super high

density environment. Hence, the shophouses became the target of demolition as part of the urban renewal programme. This situation did not change till the middle of 1980s, when conservation issues rose in Singapore. Shop-houses were upgraded through conservation: from obstacles of a clean, ordered Singapore to the heritage of a nation.

To some extent, STPB's attitude towards heritage went further than URA in this case. While URA recognized the value of heritages and tried to keep this value, STPB, initiated a plan to re-create a disappeared historical heritage to boost tourism, which showed that STPB not only recognized the value the heritage but also tried to utilize it to create more interests.

When this project first opened, the public expressed a high expectation. This reaction had proved that the strategy to make use of Bugis Street's reputation worked. However, further reaction of the public exposed more problems. The main target group was supposed to be tourists as well as locals. However, for tourists, the most unique character of Bugis Street, colorful nightlife had been relocated to another place of the town. For local people, though the physical form had been rebuilt and restored, the social ties which greatly generated active urban life had been left behind. The pure traditional service mode actually did not get much support. Modern local people had been spoiled by the one stop consuming mode with roof and air conditioner.

In the revitalizing programme, the main target group switched to the local people. More modern services and elements were added. Entertainment facilities were a focus in this programme to attract more young people. These measures brought a new life for this project.

3.1.6.3 Illumination for the future

In this case, the concept of blending old and new was already envisioned in URA's development policy. In implementation, some new structures were blended with conservation. However, the blending was actually completed by similar forms. As the beginning of a trend, it could provide at least two important lessons. First, while historical and cultural values were important aspects of heritage, more potential could be exploited. Different from other heritage, the built environment heritage could not only be appreciated and remind people of the past but also be further used. They have their own practical value, for example; their special architecture forms might be a advantage for particular activities, or their excellent locations. If all these values could be properly used, the heritage also can be interests' generators. Second, besides its historical value, the outdated aspects of some heritage had to be recognized. In this case, a pure traditional service mode was provided at first, but it did not get recognition from people as was expected. Actually the way of life has changed a lot. Modern people are not willing to live as several decades before. Besides traditional things, some modern elements are also indispensable.

3.2 Case Two: Bugis Junction

The second case is Bugis Junction, which is also located in the Bugis area. (Figure 3-10) Bounded by North Bridge Road, Middle Road, Victoria Street and Rochor Road, this area is just opposite Bugis Village. (Figure 3-11) Sharing the similar history with Bugis village, Bugis Junction has a different production story.



Figure 3-10 : The birdview of Bugis Junction
(Source: DP Architects, amended by the author)

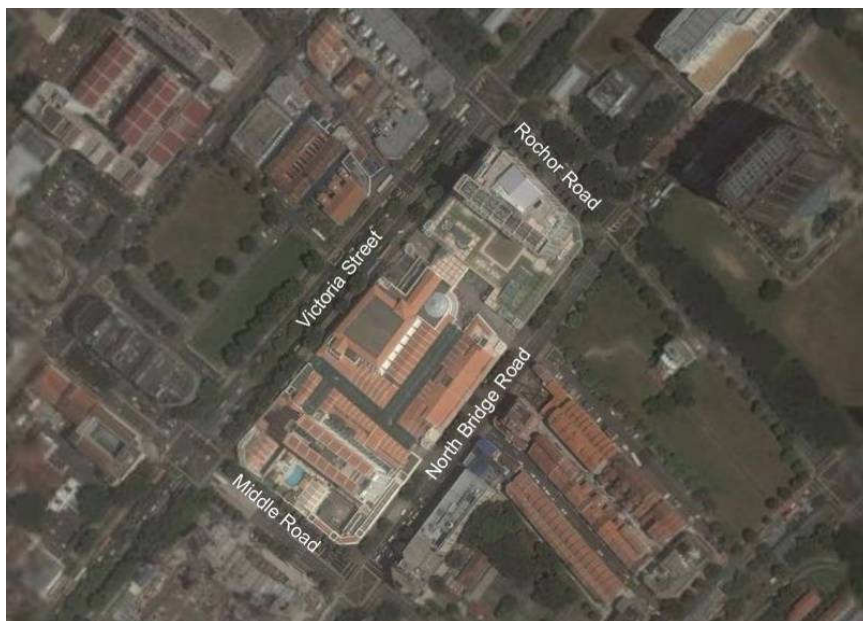


Figure 3-11 : The location of Bugis Junction
(Source: Google Earth, amended by the author)

3.2.1 Historical review

Since it is located within the same historical area is Bugis Village, Bugis Junction shares most of the historical context with Bugis Village. As the entertainment hub of Singapore, this area experienced its peak period from the early 20th century to the 1960s. During this time, the site of today's Bugis Junction had developed 8 city blocks which were full of

shop-houses. At the end of 1970s the site was compulsorily acquired by the government. The historical Bugis Street was phased out and all the occupants in those eight blocks were relocated. Hence, from that period till the land sale in 1990, only empty shop-houses that continued to deteriorate stood on the site. (Figure 3-12)



Figure 3-12 : Ruining buildings on the site of Bugis Junction before development
(Source: The Straits Times , Jun, 14th , 1990)

3.2.2 Development policy

After the land was compulsory acquired, this site was planned for manly commercial and residential use. This intention was shown on the 1985 Master Plan. (Figure 3-13)

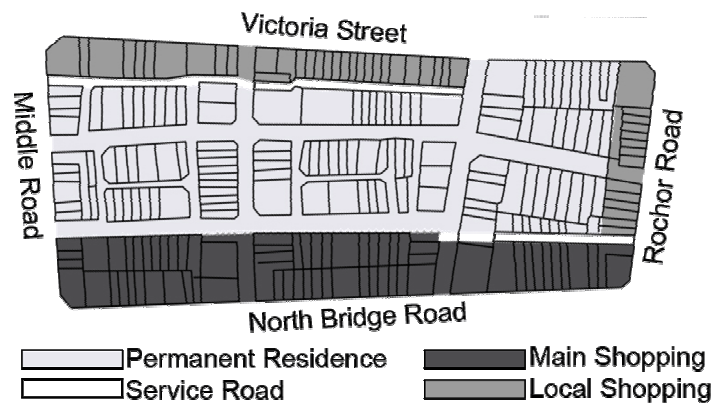


Figure 3-13 : 1985 Master Plan of Bugis Junction site
(Original source: URA, 1985 Master Plan, amended by the author)

After Mass Rapid Transit (MRT) station was decided to be located just beneath this site, this site became a prime piece of land with great development potential. URA decided to develop large commercial development on the site. Considering that it would be good to conserve the existing buildings on this site, conservation was considered as a complement for the whole development and was supposed to be completed by the developers.

3.2.3 Urban design

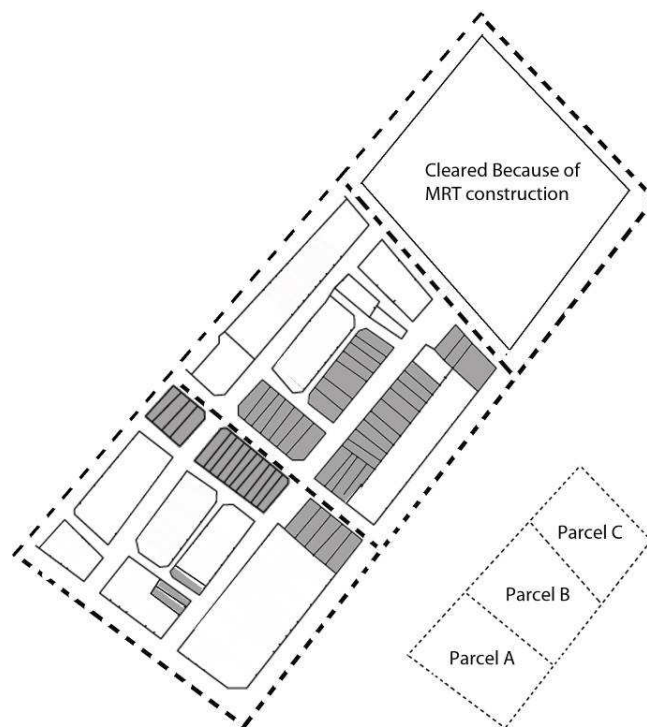


Figure 3-14 : Existing buildings and land parcels of the site

Based on the planning policy, URA proposed an entire new urban design concept for this area. Conservation was included in this urban design concept together with new developments. The whole area was divided into three parcels separated by two minor streets. (Figure 3-14) Since most of the existing shop-houses were in a very bad condition, URA stipulated that only shop-houses on three minor roads of this area would

be conserved and most of them were in parcel B. New constructions were allowed behind these shop-houses with 10 to 15 storeys. In parcel A, with fewer conserved buildings, a maximum of 13 storeys were allowed while in parcel C without conservation, 16 storeys could be built. (Figure 3-15) In addition, part construction of the underground infrastructure linked to MRT station was also included in the tender's conditions since there was a MRT station right below the site.

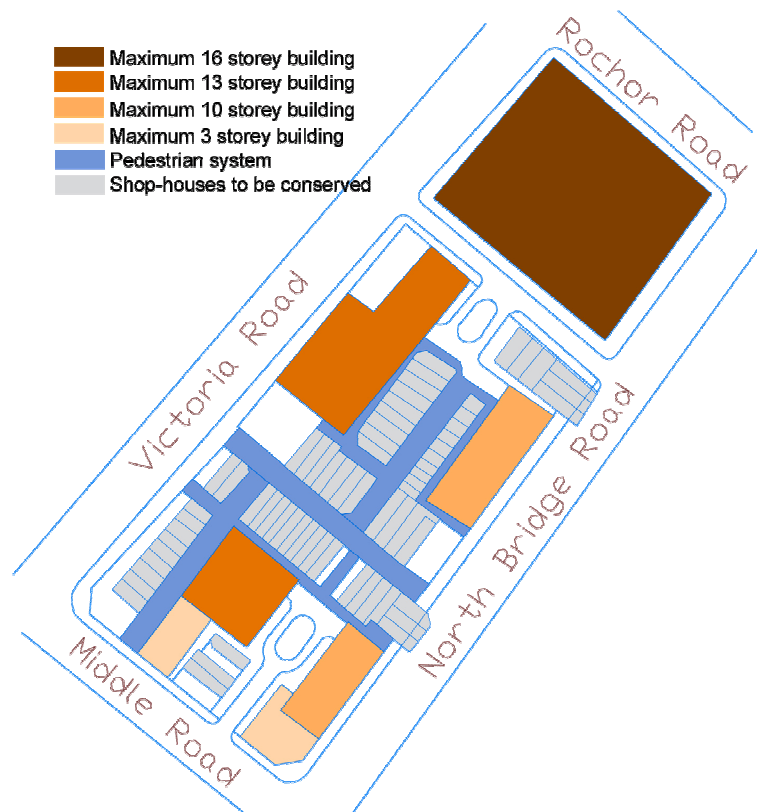


Figure 3-15 : Urban Design of Bugis Junction site

It was not a surprise for URA to propose such an urban design concept in such a situation though it was the first trial. It was at the end of 1980s, when conservation had just begun to show its charm in Singapore. The attitude towards old shop-houses changed greatly from this period. Affected by this trend, URA decided to make good use of existing shop-houses in this area as a valuable resource.

The situation was a little different from Bugis Village which was mainly aimed at tourism. This area was supposed to be a typical modern commercial development for private developers. However, at the end of 1980s, most areas in the vicinity were developed already and the majority of them were skewed towards office projects, which cannot provide a pleasant commercial and hotel atmosphere in this area. The historical negative reputation of this area as a hub of brothel activities also affected the confidence of public towards the potential commercial value of this area. “It’s a good project, but location counts. Bugis Junction is going to start off at a great disadvantage to its Orchard Road rivals.” said a property consultant in *Singapore Business*.⁹² Also in the same newspaper, a developer shares the same opinion. He said the developer of the project was “building a first-class property in a second or even third-class location”.

It was obvious that only conserved shop-houses could not fulfill the purposes of modern commercial development. Without existing ideal commercial and hotel atmosphere, more attractions should be added to attract people. The deficiencies of old shop-houses such as outdated shopping model and notorious reputation also needed to be make over by new elements. In such situation, a combination of both old of new might be the best choice.

3.2.4 Land sale

In 1990, the three parcels in this area were released by URA for sale. Keppel Land Limited showed their interest in all the three parcels. This company was one arm of the Keppel Group, which was one of Singapore's largest multinational groups with core businesses in offshore and marine, infrastructure, and property. To guarantee the success

⁹² Lee Han Shih, "Bugis Street Wise?," *Singapore Business* 1992.July.

of all the three bids, other two companies, Capital Land and Seiyu, were persuaded by Keppel Land Limited to join this programme. A new company, Bugis City Holdings (BCH), was formed to operate the programme.

With such a background, BCH was awarded all the three parcels with a price of \$300 million. (Table 3-3) Their vision of this project was an integrated development made up of shopping complex, hotel and office together.

Parcel name	A	B	C
Site area	8172 sq. m	8987 sq. m	6590sq. m
Proposed Land use	Commercial/ residential	Commercial/ residential	Commercial/office
lease	99 years	99 years	99 years
GFA	34300 sq. m	37750 sq. m	36910 sq. m
Successful Tenderer	Bugis City Holdings(BCH)		
Tender price	350 million		
Project's name	Bugis Junction		

Table 3-3 : The result of land sale

3.2.5 Architecture design

DP Architects was designated as the architect of the project.⁹³ In the original architecture perspective, the self-contained development is an integration of old and new architecture style. A five star hotel would be built on parcel A as a mixture of both old and new while a brand new office tower would be built on parcel C. Department stores and specialty shops would be located in conserved shop-houses and structures near them on parcel B. (Figure 3-16:).

⁹³ Please refer to Appendix 3.

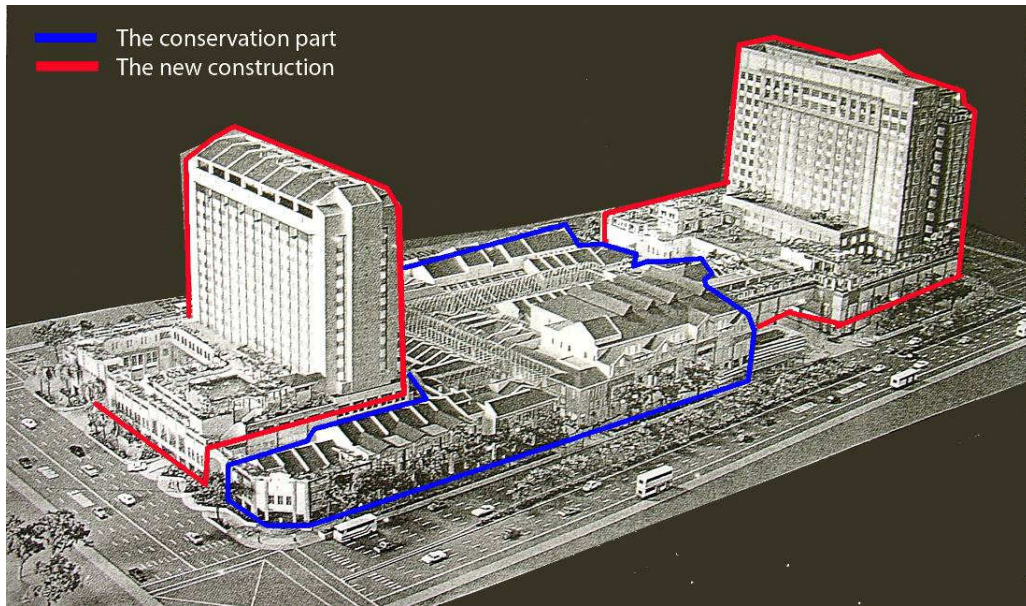


Figure 3-16: Original architecture concept
(Source: Singapore Institute of Architects Journal, July/August, 1992)

Problem occurred during the further design process. To avoid the negative impact to the surroundings, the large parking space was required to be underground by the technical conditions. However, the foundation of existing old shop-houses constrained the shape of the car park and reduced its effectiveness. Limited by the fixed parking units, the car park basement had to be deeper than expected. Because the soil condition was not good enough, a deeper car park would make the construction fee as high as 135% of budget.⁹⁴ This was unacceptable for the developer. The architect complained to URA and asked for some adjustments of related guidelines.

After his first appeal was rejected, the architect proposed an alternative plan: to remove the entire old shop-houses from the site on wheels first and build an effective underground car park with a square shape; and then move those shop-houses back after the car park construction.

⁹⁴ Please refer to the Appendix 3.

Based on this alternative solution, the architect conducted a detailed architecture design. The main architecture design concept was to create a harmonious atmosphere by blending old and new. Most of the old shop houses were conserved and new structures were also introduced. The contrast between the old and new was deliberately emphasized.

This proposal obtained approval from URA. However, the cost still exceeded the initial budget. The developer refused this proposal and appealed for permission to demolish the shop houses to the authorities overriding URA. This appeal finally was approved when the architect had finished all the designs according to his alternative proposal. Hence, it was decided to demolish all the old shop houses first and then reconstruct them after the underground car park was finished. After that, the finished architecture design proposal of the superstructure would be applied.

In the completed project, the shop-houses were subsequently reconstructed on the same site on top of the underground structure. All the facades and details were rebuilt according to documents. The architect's design proposal was applied on these rebuilt shop houses. Most of the design concepts in the proposal were realized except the authenticity of the shop houses.

Except the rebuilt shop houses, other structures were built in a modern way. Glass and steel were used to form a contrast atmosphere against the old forms. The transit areas between the old and new are stressed. (Figure 3-17)



Figure 3-17: The old form (right) and the new form (left) are separated by a transit area



Figure 3-18: A glass roof is added over the old forms

Three of the streets between the shop-houses remained after reconstruction and were covered by a big glass roof. (Figure 3-18) It was the first glass roof over a street in Singapore which made it a new attraction for shoppers. Shelters and air conditioner also provided more comfort to the users.

3.2.6 After completion

Bugis Junction opened in 1995. It enjoyed great commercial success after construction as Lim Hng Kiang, the Minister for National Development when the project was finished, described, “Bugis Junction is well placed to act as a catalyst for the revitalization of an area historically known as a trading post. This complements plans to rejuvenate and transform the Bugis area into Singapore’s next prime retail and tourist belt.”⁹⁵ The

⁹⁵ "Bugis Junction, the Voyage of Rediscovery," *The Straits Times* 1995. 8th, September.

project revitalized the whole area instead of being constrained by the “second class” location.



Figure 3-19 : The overhead bridge over Nicoll Highway
(Source: Google Earth, amended by the author)

The reason for this may be complex but some aspect should not be neglected. The first is the pedestrian traffic. The construction of the new MRT station in the mid-1980s was considered as a kind of stimulus for this area. The MRT affected land values of areas within a comfortable walking distance from the MRT stations. Fortunately, the site of Bugis Junction was within this distance and in fact it was linked directly to the Bugis MRT station after construction. The construction of other infrastructures also enhanced the accessibility of the area. The original one way Victoria Street was changed into a two way road to facilitate more traffic flow. An overhead bridges over the Nicoll Highway also facilitated the shoppers from Suntec City. (Figure 3-19)

The second was the atmosphere created by blending of old and new, though the “old” was not completely authentic. The demolished shop-houses were rebuilt to provide an

arcade-type of shopping experience. At that time, it was still a novel experience to pick up some old memories at the same time enjoy facilities bought by modern technology.

In September of 1993, the URA announced the Development Guide Plan (DGP) for Rochor area. (Figure 3-20) In this plan, new commercial developments are planned to concentrate in Bugis area to provide a different shopping experience from Orchard Road; a pedestrian corridor would be created between Bugis and Selegie Road lined with market stalls, large shopping complexes and boutiques.⁹⁶ This proposed Rochor's GDP had its positive impact on Bugis area.

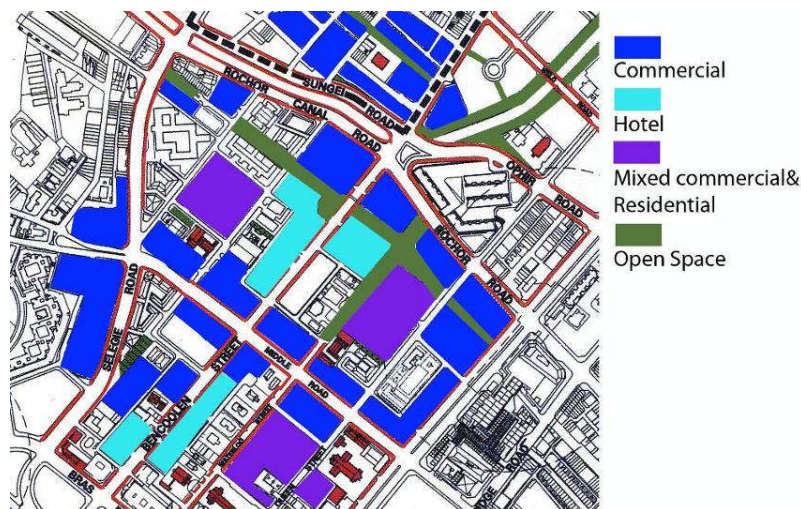


Figure 3-20 : The Development Guide Plan for Rochor area
(Source: URA website, amended by the author)

3.2.7 Lessons learnt

3.2.7.1 A changed urban fabric

From the viewpoint of urban fabric, this project did have some lessons to be distilled.

When this area was packaged into 3 parcels in 1990, it was determined that the original

⁹⁶ Urban Redevelopment Authority (Singapore), *Enhancing Rochor, Blending the Best of Old and New : Draft Development Guide Plan, September 1993* ([Singapore]: : Ura, 1993).

urban fabric could not be retained. When this project was completed, more than half of the original streets were wiped out. Two of the remaining three streets were covered by the glass roof and fixed with doors at the entrances which made those streets a semi-public space serving the shopping mall itself instead of the totally public, losing the prominent character of the traditional streets (Figure 3-21)

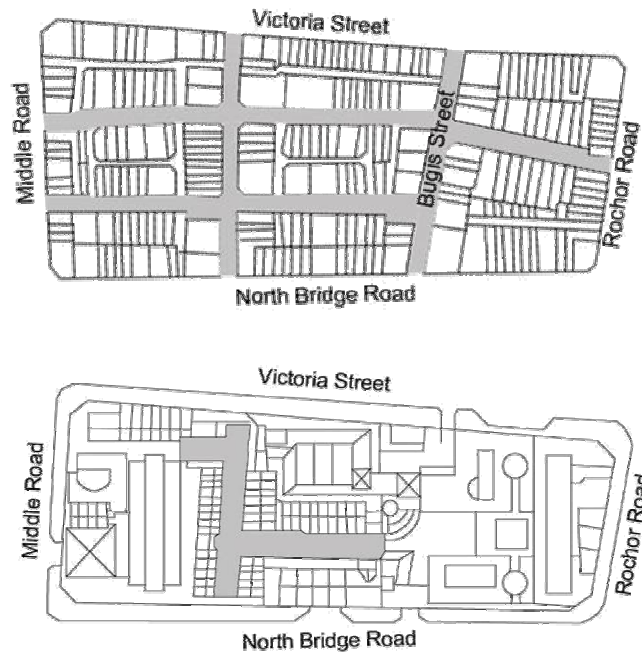


Figure 3-21 streets in 1985 (up) and 2005 (down)

3.2.7.2 *An experiment about the way of blending*

The implementation of the blending concept was another issue which should be noticed in this case. The concept of blending was introduced at the urban design level. It was URA's first attempt to do so. At the decision making stage, conservation was proposed to complement the commercial development; however, the significance of conservation was enhanced at the urban design level. All regulations, especially about conservation, were meticulously crafted. In the urban design guidelines, conservation principles were given. Exterior restoration was emphasized in these conservation guidelines. Detailed

guidelines were given about façade restoration and most of them were similar to those for Chinatown. These guidelines proscribed the form and materials of all elements on the façade including the window, railing, balcony, baluster and so on.⁹⁷ For interiors, only limited architecture elements were referred to in guidelines and more space was left for further adaptation work. Even major structural changes such as the demolishing of party walls which would be precluded in other conservation projects were not mentioned.⁹⁸ These guidelines showed that the some requirements for commercial development had been considered while the exterior facades were the focus of conservation.

The forms of newly built structures were also controlled in the guidelines. All the roofs had to be covered with unglazed clay tiles in order to be consistent with conservation including buildings on parcel C, where no conservation was required. The new car park building was also required to be underground to avoid negative impact. Similar form was still a preferred way of blending at this time. The exterior restoration was the focus of conservation work, or even the focus of whole development. Besides strict restoration guidelines, other new buildings had to keep consistent with it.

The real effect of these guidelines was challenged at implementation level. When a problem happened, negotiations largely failed. On the one hand, URA refused to adjust the related guidelines; on the other hand, the developer had the power and strength to insist on its commercial interests. This dilemma could be avoided at the land sale stage when URA could choose its potential “opponents”, the developers. However, the potential threat of an influential developer was underestimated. When all the parcels were

97 Please refer to Appendix 5

98 Please refer to Appendix 5

sold to one developer, the development strategy for all the three parcels had been downgraded from an area-based decision to a site-based decision. Without parallel references and regulations from the area-based decision level, this area, as a site, might enjoy less constraint from its context. This is one reason that leading to the current result: the developer successfully influenced the original development policy of the government and became the winner

After demolishing, it was actually not necessary to rebuild all the shop-houses as they were not required by URA for, after all, the original ones were demolished. But the reconstruction was still conducted to apply an architecture design proposal with the concept of blending. Differing from the blending concept of Bugis Village, blending in this project was completed by the combination of different styles. The daily crowds in Bugis Junction also showed public's appreciation of such blending.

This project could represent a stage of Singapore's inner city urban renewal. At this stage, the pressure from the market demand was still the prime driving force of development. It was already recognized that the built environment could be used as a resource in this kind of commercial development; however, both the government and the developer lacked experience on how to make good use of this resource in the modern context.

In Bugis Junction, the government constructed a frame for the developments blending of old and new. In this frame, the government played the roles as authority, planner, urban designer and coordinator of tender. Private sector was introduced as developer and architect. The setting of such frame enabled the government to fully control the development levels from policy making to urban design and tender. Although the

architecture design was open to the developer and architect, the government kept its influence by adding planning and urban design guidelines and supervising the implementation of them. Hence, each level of the whole development process was under certain pre-set order.

The problem about the car-park station which was encountered in the architecture design reflected a requirement of better collaboration between different roles during the implementation stage. While the guidelines could be made more practical, more flexibility could also be given through negotiations.

3.2.7.3 Illumination for the future

Three main lessons can be drawn from the case of Bugis Junction. First, when conservation is inserted into a commercial development, both conservation and commercial aspects should be considered carefully. In this case, if the economic feasibility of the underground car park could be enhanced when the URA made their guidelines, or the developer cared more about conservation, the reconstruction of the shop-houses could be avoided. Second, to better guarantee the final outcome, more careful controls should be given at the land sale stage. In this case, the land sale was not well controlled. The development policy for an urban area was downgraded into a decision for a single site after all the three sites were joined into one site. Third, Bugis Junction provided an alternative way of blending in forms. In Bugis Village, blending of old and new was completed by similar forms. However in Bugis Junction, a combination of old and new was created not only by similarity but also by comparison and contrast. Such combination offered more choice for future developments and provided new experience for shoppers.

3.3 Case Three: Central Mall

The third case is Central Mall. (Figure 3-22) This project was part of the Riverside Village area and located within the inner city, however, few people know of this project or this whole area as a destination of relaxing or social activity. The reason will be explained at the end of this case study.



Figure 3-22 : Perspective of Central Mall

Central Mall is part of the Riverside Village area which is located south of Singapore River and north of Chinatown. Riverside Village is bounded by Magazine Road, Clemenceu Avenue, Havelock Road, Keng Cheow Street. (Figure 3-23)



Figure 3-23 location of Central Mall

3.3.1 Historical review

Located at the south bank of Singapore River, this area used to be called Hong Lim Quay before 1930.⁹⁹ The urban growth of this area was closely related to the development of Singapore River.

Historically, Singapore River played a significant role during the urbanization process of Singapore, especially for areas along the river. The development of Hong Lim Quay area had been taken into consideration of the earliest planning in Singapore. However, it is actual urbanization was behind the lower reaches of the Singapore River.

In 1819, the island was claimed as a free port. Because of its strategic location, a vital point on the trade route between Europe and China, trade quickly flourished. Singapore

⁹⁹ Stephen Dobbs, *The Singapore River : A Social History 1819-2002*, Singapore: Studies in Society & History. (Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2003). Map 6

River began its history as an international port and a trading centre. The growing economic significance of Singapore River showed its impact on the early urbanization of Singapore. In Raffle's early planning intention, Singapore River was used as a main natural boundary between different ethnic groups.¹⁰⁰ The river was also regarded as a heart of commercial life. In the plan Raffles made between 1822 to 1823, the Singapore River area was divided into four zones. (Figure 3-24)

The first zone was dedicated to government use; the second zone was reserved for merchants removed from the north bank. The third one was a Chinese settlement and land for commercial use and the last zone, which covered the Hong Lim Quay area, was set aside for a group of Indians named "Chuliahs"¹⁰¹ and commercial use.¹⁰² These Chuliahs people were proposed to be boatmen or other occupations employed by river related business.

¹⁰⁰ Buckley, *An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore : (with Portraits and Illustrations) from the Foundation of the Settlement under the Honourable the East India Company, on February 6th, 1819, to the Transfer of the Colonial Office as Part of the Colonial Possessions of the Crown on April 1st, 1867.* p56-58. original Map is in C buckley The area south of the River was designated to "native" groups. The bank from present Elgin Bridge to the mouth of the river was dedicated to Chinese and the areas above the Elgin Bridge, including the Hong Lim Quay area, were left to form Malay kampongs. Dobbs, *The Singapore River : A Social History 1819-2002.*p.7.

¹⁰¹ Buckley, *An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore : (with Portraits and Illustrations) from the Foundation of the Settlement under the Honourable the East India Company, on February 6th, 1819, to the Transfer of the Colonial Office as Part of the Colonial Possessions of the Crown on April 1st, 1867.* p73 The Chuliahs were afterwards called Klings in Singapore. ...It was the name given by the Malays and Javanese to the Telinga nation of Southern India, and appeared to be a corruption or abbreviation of the genuine name of the country of that people, Kalinga.

¹⁰² Dobbs, *The Singapore River : A Social History 1819-2002.* p24

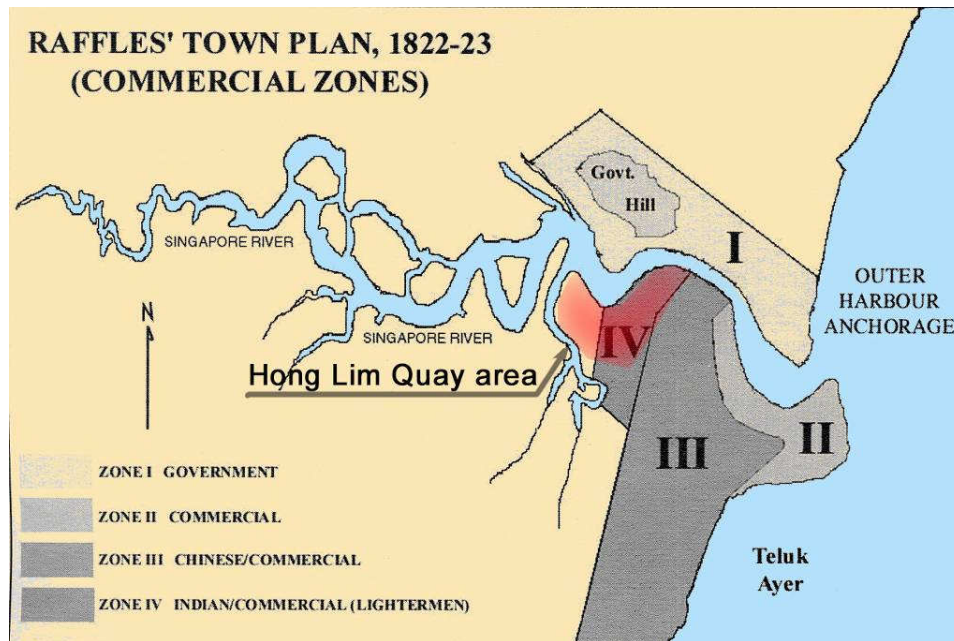


Figure 3-24: Four zones in Raffles' 1822-1823 plan
(Source: Dobbs, *The Singapore River : A Social History 1819-2002*)

After Hong Lim Quay area was allocated to the Chuliah people, they did not set up a mature community as planned. After the allocation, most of these people deliberately settled their homes near the heart of the commercial area, and their settlement and activities centre moved gradually to the centre of the town, around Chulia Street.¹⁰³ The Hong Lim Quay area, which was part of their original allocated settlement, was left behind.

The thriving trade along Singapore River brought intensive construction work along its bank, and most of them concentrated along Boat Quay area. By 1865, the area from the river mouth to Elgin Bridge had been developed.¹⁰⁴ However, the prosperous

¹⁰³ Dobbs, *The Singapore River : A Social History 1819-2002*. p24

¹⁰⁴ From the river's entrance to this bridge (Elgin Bridge), one the town side, a long range of godowns extends, forming a complete crescent. ... On the eastern bank of the river for a considerable way up there are no houses, the land having been reserved for Government purposes, but the green grass and the foliage which surrounded the public offices erected close by, forming a very pleasing contrast to the thickly-packed buildings opposite Singapore. Oral History Dept., *Singapore Lifeline : The River and Its People* (Singapore: Times Books International : Oral History Department, 1986). P21

development did not happen in Hong Lim Quay. From the map of 1836, most settlement concentrated east of South Bridge Road. Large area of today's Chinatown and upper reaches of Singapore River were still in its original natural conditions. (Figure 3-25) From 1840s, human settlement began to spread into this area. A map draw in 1854 showed clearly that by 1842¹⁰⁵, some settlements, probably in the form of shop-houses, had occupied the southeast part of this area. (Figure 3-26) However, these early settlements did not bring further developments and activities. According to John Cameron, at the time 1865, there was only some insignificant traffic taking place above Elgin Bridge.¹⁰⁶

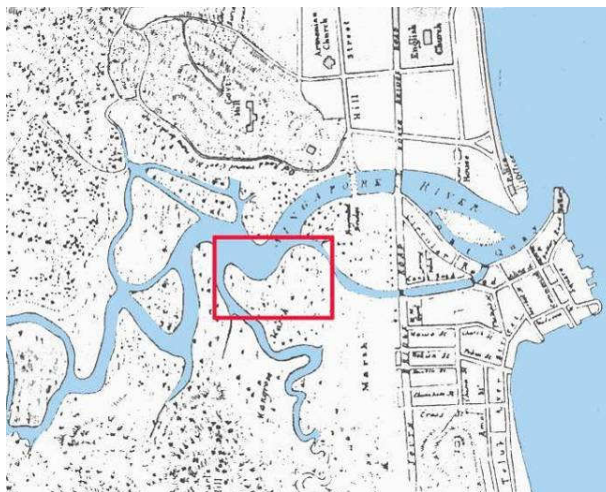


Figure 3-25: The 1836 map
(Source: National Archives of Singapore amended by the author)

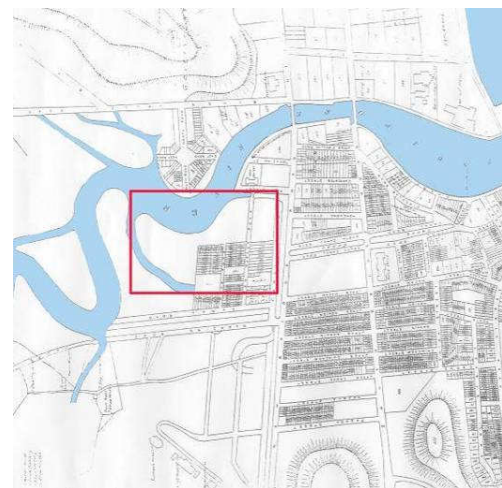


Figure 3-26: The 1854 map
(Source: National Archives of Singapore amended by the author)

The situation of Hong Lim Quay began to change from 1869. The opening of Suez Canal greatly facilitated the transportation between Europe and Asia and promoted Singapore from a regional trading centre to a global commercial hub. The completion of Keppel

¹⁰⁵ This map was draw according to the 1842 survey.

¹⁰⁶ Singapore . Oral History Dept., *Singapore Lifeline : The River and Its People*. P21

harbor also provided deep waters and better services for larger vessels¹⁰⁷ while smaller vessels preferred to anchor in the river. After 1869, the number of these smaller vessels increased quickly due to the enlarged market.¹⁰⁸

Prosperous port trade greatly accelerated the development of upper reaches of the river, including Hong Lim Quay area. Apart from shop-houses, warehouse as another dominating building type began to occupy the Hong Lim Quay area. Compared to shop-houses, warehouses had a closer relationship with trading activities. The first warehouse was built around 1820s. Those early warehouses featured *Doric columns, rounded arches, tall windows and Chinese roof tiles.*¹⁰⁹ While shop-houses dominated the areas directly fronting the river, warehouses were often located on secondary prime sites and used as lodges for boatmen.¹¹⁰ By the beginning of 20th century, there had formed a concentration of ware-houses along Havelock Road.¹¹¹

Following the construction of shop-houses and warehouses, some infrastructure and institutional facilities were also built in this area, as well as the development of urban life. Two Bridges and a temple were built around the 1870s. Tan Si Chong Su Temple, which functioned as a community centre or even a major landmark for the whole Singapore River area, was built in 1876. The old Ord Bridge and the Read Bridge were built in 1886 and in 1887 separately. (Figure 3-27)

¹⁰⁷ Dobbs, *The Singapore River : A Social History 1819-2002*. p9-11

¹⁰⁸ Between 1880 and 1920, the number of the vessels arriving at the river port increased from 4,657 to 17,167. Ibid. p9-11

¹⁰⁹ Sumiko Tan, *Streets of Old Chinatown : Singapore* (Singapore: : Page Media, 1990). P99

¹¹⁰ The oldest recorded was built in 1843. Located on Lower North Boat Quay between Hallpike Street and North Bridge Road, it was used as worker's former living quarters. Old Ice House was another famous landmark along the river. This building located at the junction of North Boat Quay and River Valley Road, which was probably on the east side of today's Clarke quay. It was used for ice storage. Linda Berry, *Singapore's River : A Living Legacy* (Singapore: : Eastern Universities Press, 1982). P75 & P86

¹¹¹ Lowe-Ismail, Leung, and Singapore Heritage Society., *Chinatown Memories*. P20



Figure 3-27 : The 1904 map of Hong Lim Quay area
(Source: National Archives of Singapore, amended by the author)

These bridges and temple provide more opportunities to generate more urban activities in Hong Lim Quay area. Named after Singapore's first governor, the old Ord Bridge was a narrow cast iron pedestrian bridge. It was often used as short-cut by Indian laborers from south of the river, to the toddy (coconut wine) shop at the north bank. People from the north bank also went to the Tan Si Chong Su Temple via the same bridge.¹¹² Colorful operas were held along the river banks during festivals.¹¹³ There used to be a market along the Hong Lim Quay, mainly selling charcoal. Piles of burnt wood lined the bank, which formed the unique urban-scape for this area.¹¹⁴ Storytellers and their audience would also stay along the river bank.¹¹⁵

Although the urbanization of Hong Lim Quay area that of the lower reaches of Singapore River, such as Boat Quay, it had its own position in the urbanization process of Singapore.

¹¹² Ibid. P20

¹¹³ Ibid.

¹¹⁴ Ibid.

¹¹⁵ Dale, *Urban Planning in Singapore : The Transformation of a City*. P92

It reflected a boom period of Singapore triggered by the Suez Canal. While shop-houses and warehouses sprung up quickly, some public facilities were also built. Colorful urban life was generated in and around these buildings and facilities. All the buildings, public facilities, and people's activities constituted a vibrant picture of Singapore's urbanization.



Figure 3-28: Pollution of the river
(Source: Hon, *Tidal Fortunes : A Story of Change : The Singapore River and Kallang Basin*)

When vibrant urban life was generated on the banks, pollution occurred in the river. Pollution of Singapore River accompanied the urban development along the river throughout its history. The activities of early settlement led to pollution in the early years. The development of agriculture and industry, such as the construction of vegetable farms, pig farms, sago mills and seaweed factories, aggravated pollution from the beginning of 20th century. In the 1950s, the pollution in the river basins climaxed to a point that something had to be done to alleviate this situation. ¹¹⁶ (Figure 3-28)

In the early 1977, a national river cleaning movement began with a speech of Lee Kuan Yew, which proclaimed that it should be a way of life to keep the water clean. All

¹¹⁶ Hon, *Tidal Fortunes : A Story of Change : The Singapore River and Kallang Basin*. P37

pollution sources had to be cleared. The steamboats, which used to gather along the river, were relocated to another place on the island. The last steamboat left Singapore River in 1983. By then, the river ended its history as a port.

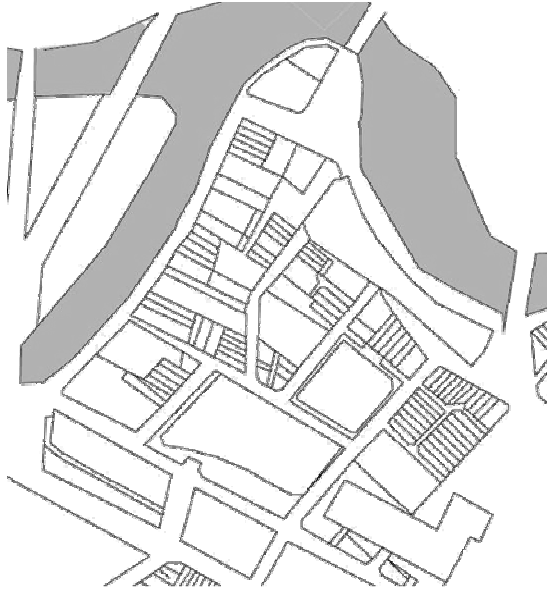


Figure 3-29 : Hong Lim Quay after river cleaning

After all boatmen, hawkers, factory workers together with their businesses were relocated, their buildings in the form of shop-houses and ware-houses along the river were left behind. Hence, the whole area of historical Hong Lim Quay was acquired by the government after river cleaning, waiting to be redeveloped. (Figure 3-29)

3.3.2 Development policy

The current developments in this area were guided by the Singapore River Development Guide Plan 1994. The planning process started after the river cleaning was completed around the end of the 1980s. A draft of this plan was published in 1992. After the feedback from the public was collected, the formal version, the Singapore River Development Guide Plan was issued in 1994. The objective of this Plan was to revitalize

the Singapore River to be a place for “*leisure, recreation and entertainment—a stark contrast to the sweat and toil of past days*”¹¹⁷ since the Singapore River is where the nation’s root as a dock trading center lie.

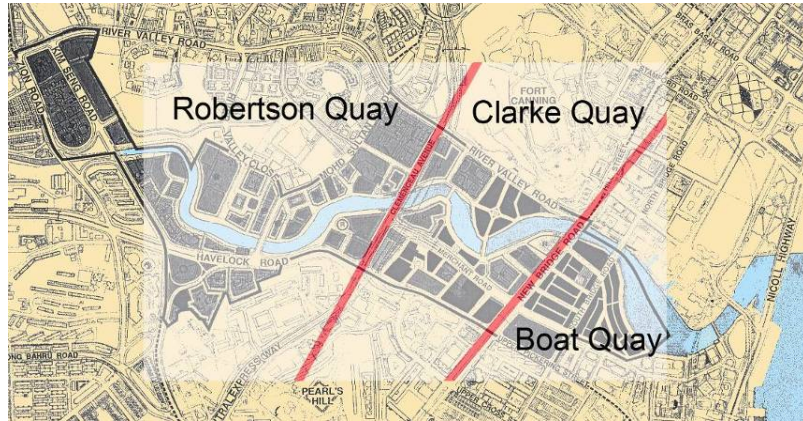


Figure 3-30 : Sub-zones of Singapore River
(Source: Dale, *Urban Planning in Singapore : The Transformation of a City*)

Under this plan, the Singapore River was divided into three sub-zones: Boat Quay, Clarke Quay and Robertson Quay. (Figure 3-30 :) Each of these sub-zones had its own character. The Riverside Village area was included in the Clarke Quay Zone. The stipulated character of Riverside Village, the south bank of Singapore River in Clarke Quay Zone was similar commercial ventures with an emphasis on a smaller scale.¹¹⁸ Main land uses of this area were commercial use and local shopping. (Figure 3-31)

¹¹⁷ Urban Redevelopment Authority (Singapore), "Riverside Village," *Skyline*, no. Nov/Dec (1991). The newly envisaged role of Singapore River was defined as a “meeting places for Singaporeans and tourists alike”.

¹¹⁸ Urban Redevelopment Authority (Singapore), *Singapore River Planning Area : Planning Report 1994* (Singapore: : URA, 1994).

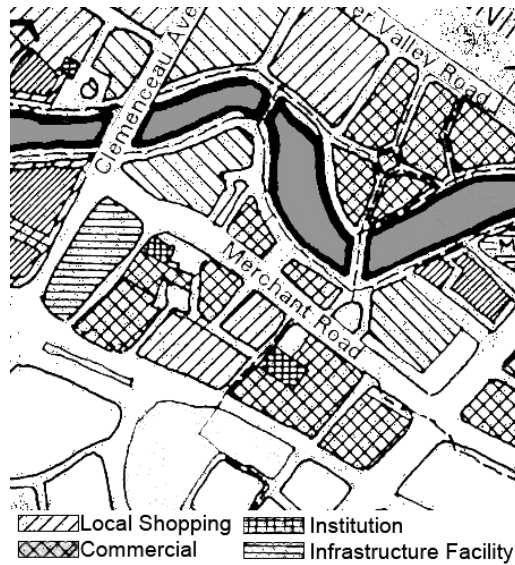


Figure 3-31: land use in the plan

(Source: Dale, *Urban Planning in Singapore: The Transformation of a City*, amended by the author)

3.3.3 Urban Design

The urban design concept of this area was inspired by those existing low-rise shop-houses and ware- houses. This character was noticed by URA as a *unique ambience and character and the impression of being a small village*¹¹⁹. Hence, to maintain the character and uniqueness of this area became an important urban design objective. While existing old shop-houses and warehouses were going to be conserved, new constructions were also introduced. The concept of blending old and new was introduced at this level.

¹¹⁹ Urban Redevelopment Authority (Singapore), "Riverside Village."

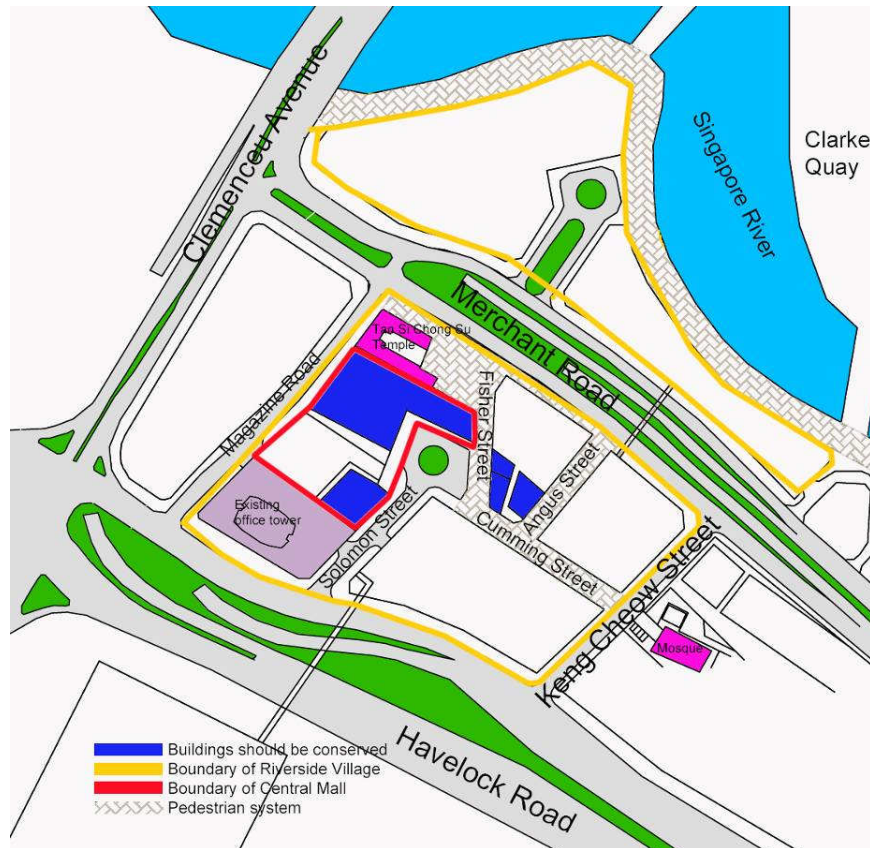


Figure 3-32 : Pedestrian system and conservation of Riverside Village



Figure 3-33 : The mosque located southeast of Riverside Village

A modest pedestrian system was stipulated in the centre of the 8 parcels. (Figure 3-32)

One end of it pointed to a mosque situated in an adjoining block.(Figure 3-33)

Guidelines as technical conditions were provided which contained requirements of the

building form, the activities allowed and the maintaining of pedestrian system. For parcels C and D, which were the only two parcels containing old shop-houses, conservation guidelines were given. Most of the contents of these conservation guidelines were similar with those of Chinatown. Detailed requirements were listed clearly to keep the original appearance of the shop-houses.

3.3.4 Land sale

The tenders began at the end of 1991. All the eight parcels were released. An advertisement appeared in local newspaper in the beginning of 1992. Most of sales marketing focused on the charm of the river: "Today, along its banks, numerous new developments are taking shape. You can be part of this exciting phase as the Urban Redevelopment Authority releases the Riverside Village for sale. Eight prime parcels of land at Merchant Road, along the Singapore River to be moulded and transformed. ...Here's the challenge for investors and developers: to restore to the Singapore River the attention and importance it once enjoyed; to return the life and activity to this historic location....Capture the River heritage in spirit. Complement its surroundings in architectural expression. Strong in design, high in quality."¹²⁰

After three months, with the exception of two rejected bids with unacceptable prices, no bids were received which made URA reconsider its sale strategy. After talks with prospective developers, URA decided to give them the option to combine the parcels A and B, D and H, F and E. It also allowed linkages of about 12 meters wide and up to four-storey high between parcels A and B. In addition, some combination of parcels were also

¹²⁰ Urban Redevelopment Authority (Singapore), "Follow the Flow of Our Riverside Heritage and Realize Your Visions," *Business Times*, 3rd, Jan 1992.

allowed with conditions.¹²¹ But these actions did not contribute much to the impassive situation. By July, 1992, only two of the eight parcels (C&D) received bids and were sold.

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URA decided to re-package other parcels to enhance their attractiveness. The main method used in this re-package was to combine parcels. Different from the adjustments 4 months earlier, which just allowed combination of parcels with conditions, this time the parcels were directly merged together. This decision also proclaimed the abortion of the initial land sale intention to keep this area an atmosphere of “village” by small land parcels. When new tenders opened in Nov, 1992, there were four parcels left. (Figure 3-34)



Figure 3-34 : The repackaged parcels
(Source: Business Times, Mar, 12th, 1992
Amended by the author)



Figure 3-35 : The projects map
(Source: Business Times, Mar, 12th, 1992
amended by the author)

¹²¹ The developers could submit a joint tender for each pair of sites but must still put in bids for each parcel and the tender would be evaluated as a single package.

¹²² Parcel D was sold to its sole bidder, Hong Leong Holdings, at \$12.28 million as commercial and residential development. The tender for parcel C was the hottest one of the eight. Finally, Far East Organization gained parcel C at the price of \$37.5 million which was 2.5 times more than the second highest con-tender. The success of Parcel C tender could be due to the support from the STPB. It announced a plan to provide boating activities along the Singapore River as part of the URA's Riverside Village land sale. Four motorized boats would be allowed to be water transport for the successful tenderers of this parcel.

Two parcels received bids this time and both of them were slated for a *mix of new commercial developments and restored conservation buildings*.¹²³ In the middle of 1994, the last parcel, Parcel B as a repackaged parcel was sold. Parcel A along Singapore River and combined with two smaller ones remained unsold till today.¹²⁴

After the land sale, five projects in this area were launched finally. These projects were completed in 1997. The five developments that occupied the five parcels were the Riverside Point, Central Mall, Central Square, Merchant Square and Riverside Piazza. (Figure 3-37 & Table 3-3)

Parcel name	1	2	3	4	5
Site area	5200 sq. m	3300 sq. m	6300 sq. m	2900 sq. m	4800 sq. m
Proposed Land use	Commercial/office/	Commercial/residential	Commercial/residential	Commercial/office	Carpark station/Commercial/office
Lease	99 years	99 years	99 years	99 years	99 years
GFA	Retail&office	Retail&Office 2880 sq. m Residential 40 apts	Retail&Office 6900 sq. m Residential 10479	Retail & office 3410 sq. m	Retail& office 7500 sq. m
Successful Tenderer	Far East Organization	Hong Leong Holdings	Orchard Parade Holdings Ltd	Food Alley Pte Ltd	City Development Limited
Tender price	37.5 million	12.28 million	71.7 million	6.89 million	11.5 million
Project's name	Riverside Point	Riverside Piazza	Central Square	Merchant Square	Central Mall

Table 3-4 : The result of Riverside Village land sale

The entire area was dedicated to retail, office and residence as well as some entertainment along the river.

¹²³ Colin Tan, "Four Bids for Re-Tender of Riverside Village Sites," *Business Times*, 25th, Nov 1992.

¹²⁴ Developers and analysts attributed the poor response of Parcel A to the high prices expected by URA. With the price expected by URA, a developer would have to build a five-star hotel to recover the investment. Hence a developer said that "with falling room rates and flat occupancy rates, there was too much risk to get into hotel development now." (Business Times, November 25th, 1992) At a time when the whole area was till largely untested for an office and residential development, most developers choose to hold on and waiting for the public responding of a similar project in the same area launched by Hong Leong Holdings.

3.3.5 Architectural design

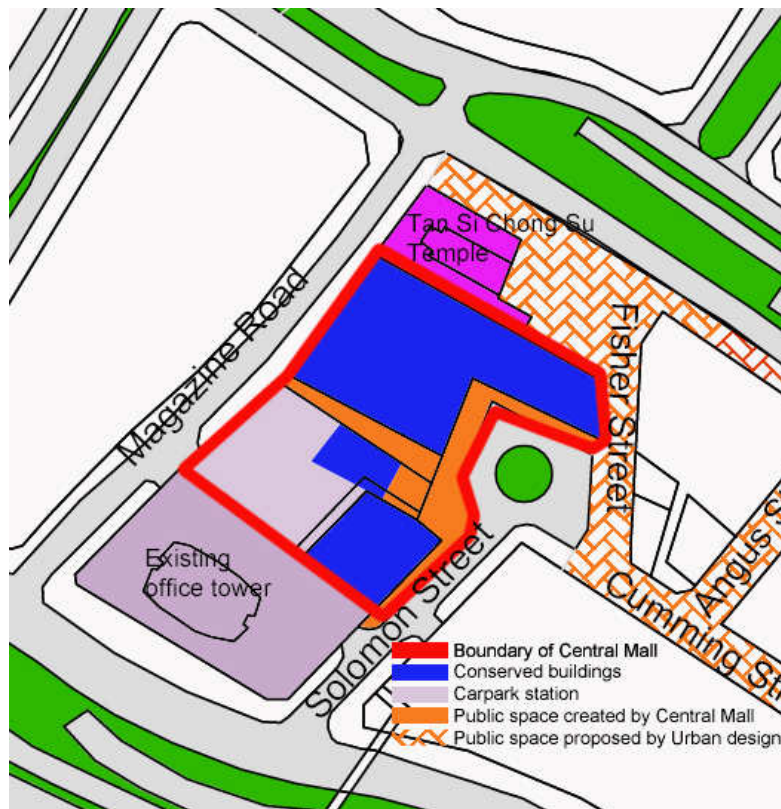


Figure 3-36 : The site Plan of Central Mall

Central Mall was chosen as a case to be studied because it contained more conservation buildings than any other project among the five projects in Riverside Village area. Central Mall occupied land parcel C in the repackage parcels. The site area was 4805 square meters. Land use of this site was mainly commercial and entertainment. A car-park building was also stipulated by the urban design guidelines. The successful tenderer of this site was City Developments Limited (CDL). Apart from an acceptable price, CDL also had other considerations for their tender.

There was an office building named Central Building located south to this site. (Figure 3-36) This building was a permanent property of CDL. Built in the 1980s, this building needed to be restored and more car park units were also needed. When CDL was

planning for its restoration work, the site next to this office building was released by URA and a new car park building was also included in this site. (Figure 3-36) If this new released site could be awarded to CDL, not only the car park problem of the office building could be solved, the two adjacent developments could also be joined together to form a bigger development.

The architecture design was undertaken by P&T Consultants. The main architectural design concept was to join these two sites together to create a blending project containing both restored office building and conservation. The office building was completely restored in a modern way, from external façade to internal design. Stones and glass were used on the facades. The proposed new car park building was connected to the office building at its third level. Besides physical linkage, all the architectural style, materials and textures of the car park was consistent with the restored office building. The car park building, as it had been stipulated in urban design guidelines, *the facades of the car park structure shall relate to the existing buildings to be conserved and restored in terms of architectural treatments, scale, proportion, solid-void relationship, and material and texture.*¹²⁵ The architect did not “relate” the car park building to the conserved buildings with similar appearances. The car park was closely related to the modern office building and contrasted with the conserved buildings. This might be different from the initial intention of the guidelines but provided another solution. (Figure 3-37 :)

With the exception of the car park building, conservation was another important part of this project. All the shop-houses and warehouse were strictly restored according to the

¹²⁵ Urban Redevelopment Authority (Singapore), *Tender Brief, Ura Sale of Site for Residential & Commercial Development at Riverside Village: Land Parcel G* (URA, 1994).

conservation guidelines. All the physical elements, from roofs, party walls to windows and doors even paints, were restored to their original forms. Only usage was adapted to commercial and entertainment. The first storey of the shop-houses was used for food and beverage while the warehouse was supposed to be used as a cineplex.



Figure 3-37 : The car park building, office building and shop-houses in Central Mall

As to the proposed pedestrian mall, while most of it was left to relevant authority, a small part of it in the form of a plaza was required to be finished within Central Mall. Hence, a small plaza at the centre of the site was proposed in the design proposal.

The architectural design proposal was approved easily since it strictly complied with all related guidelines. In fact, the architect had some complaints about the strict conservation guidelines. While everything was already prescribed, the creative freedom left to the

architect was limited. “If the guidelines were more flexible, we could make this project more interesting such as Xin’tiandi in Shanghai¹²⁶” said the architect.¹²⁷

3.3.6 After completion

After the official opening, Riverside Village area did not become a popular destination attracting people by its village-like atmosphere. Instead, most of it, including Central Mall and the other four projects south of Merchant Road, became a quiet enclosure in inner city. Most of the time, quietness prevails throughout the area. (Figure 3-38)



Figure 3-38 : The quietness

Only people who know about the existing facilities would come purposely. Special lunch or dinner promotions could also draw some people in at some time. The well furnished

¹²⁶ Please refer to Appendix 3, Interview 4

¹²⁷ Please refer to Appendix 3, Interview 7

offices with services which are suitable for foreign firms could not find their tenants; and the services apartments including maid and laundry also do not have enough tenants.

The reason for this situation is quite complex as one expert described : “The whole idea of Singapore River master plan was to recreate a thriving living and business environment, but Riverside Village is hounded by a triple dose of bad medicine—from the overall sluggish economy, inadequate infrastructure and not enough resident population”¹²⁸

3.3.7 Lessons learnt

3.3.7.1 A mishap of planning

The whole planning concept for this area was part of the Singapore River Development Plan; therefore the key element of the planning concept was the river. In history, Singapore River had played a leading role for the development of this area. Not only urban forms, but also urban activities and lives were all closely related to the River. Hence, it seemed a rational choice to include this area into a plan prepared for the river area.

As part of the river revitalization programme, Riverside Village was planned as a multifunctional area with Singapore River as its main attraction. However, the impact of Merchant Road had been underestimated in this planning. This road separated most part of Riverside Village from the river front. (Figure 3-39)

¹²⁸ T.S.Sim, "All Quiet on the Riverfront," *Property Review*, Aug 1998. The expert was Tay Kah Poh, Research Director at Knight Frank. He also estimated that Riverside Village would take off in two to three years, given the problems mentioned. Without the debilitation setbacks, it could have taken off in as soon as a year.



Figure 3-39: The south part of Riverside Village is isolated



Figure 3-40: The Merchant Road



Figure 3-41: The Havelock Road

This highway was constructed between 1985 and 1992, before the Singapore River Development Plan was made. While this road was absent on the 1985 map, in the 1992 planning draft, this road had been considered as an existing condition with its current

scale. It is an eight-lane expressway with a width of about forty meters including two tunnels in the middle. (Figure 3-40) The road completely cut off the pedestrian traffic from the north at the ground level. Besides Merchant Road, another road, Havelock Road on the southern edge of the area also blocked the pedestrian traffic from another direction. In the middle of Havelock Road, there is an exit of the tunnel from Merchant Road. With this exit, the road south of Riverside Village becomes a six-lane one way expressway with fences in the middle. As a major road going into downtown, there is always busy traffic on this road. Around 4pm on a weekday afternoon, more than 130 vehicles would pass by within one and a half minute or the equivalent of 5000 vehicles per hour. (Figure 3-41). West of Riverside Village is a large stretch of open field. Clemenceau Avenue is on the other side of the field. Potential pedestrian traffic is also precluded from the west. (Figure 3-39)

While the pedestrian accessibility on the ground level had been totally cut off, the importance of infrastructures such as over-head bridges or underground passes increased. The isolated situation could be changed if there were sufficient infrastructures or convenient public transportation. However, infrastructure did not improve the isolated situation of Riverside Village. The lack of infrastructures cut off pedestrian traffic at both upper and under ground levels. There are only two narrow overhead bridges and one bus stop in this area. (Figure 3-39) One of them links Riverside Point with Merchant Square; and the other one connects Central Square to the HDB buildings on the other side of Havelock Road.

The poor accessibility disappointed most people. Pamela Lee recorded her feeling as: “... *I was surprised to see buildings, that used to be together, separated by roads. I*

imagined a pedestrian having to go up a flight of steps to cross to the other side. I imagined a businessman trying to do business with a highway severing pedestrian movement. I was so frustrated that I turn to a fellow board member who was in charge of building roads and said 'You are a builder of islands, not islands surrounded by water, islands surrounded by roads.'”¹²⁹ People seldom regard this area as a dining or relaxing destination. For people who come to this area purposely, the feeling of isolation is quite common. Such as the description of Pushpa Latha, a secretary at an IT firm: *“Central Mall, where I work, is not as central as it sounds. Most of my colleagues are fed up because it is difficult to get a decent lunch as the nearby food court at Merchant Square has only three stalls open, and there are not many buses that serve this area so we have to walk all the way to People’s Park Center (560 meters away) or Apollo Center(400 meters away)”*¹³⁰

While almost all potential pedestrian traffic is blocked, the main land use for this area is set as commercial and local shopping. Both of them are dependent on the pedestrian traffic. Hence, the root of the problem lies in the contradiction between the isolated site situation and the over reliance on pedestrian traffic.

In fact, there is potential of support population for this area. At the junction of Magazine Road and Clemenceau Avenue, three corners are occupied by residential clusters. (Figure 3-42) Over ten HDB blocks taller than ten-storey are located south of Havelock Road and a condominium is situated east of Clemenceau Avenue. All residents in these buildings

¹²⁹ Lee, *Singapore, Tourism & Me*.

¹³⁰ T.S.Sim, "All Quiet on the Riverfront."

could provide support for the businesses in Riverside Village area if they could go to this area conveniently.



Figure 3-42 : The residence around Riverside Village
(Source: Google Earth, amended by the author)

However, little improvement work has been done. For URA, they left the place to developers to build more infrastructures because in their opinion those infrastructures could work better if they could be built together with the buildings that they were linking. For the developers, such work was supposed to be done by the government instead of the private sector. The miscommunication leads to the current situation: everyone knows what should be done but no one is willing to start.

3.3.7.2 Carelessness of urban design

At the urban design level, the river oriented planning idea had been further developed. A village like atmosphere was emphasized as the main urban design vision. Diversity as one character of the village atmosphere was somewhat over stressed so that its feasibility was not given enough consideration. The whole area was divided into small parcels and supposed to be sold to different developers. However, the economic feasibility of these

small parcels was neglected and such shortcoming was fully exposed by the unsatisfactory outcome of the tender.

In the urban design guidelines, much freedom was given for those new structures. In these guidelines, except for some basic parameters such as permitted land use, allowed GFA and building height, no more constraints were given for the new buildings. The land use control was especially general and decisions were mostly left to the developers. This strategy might lead to an ideal atmosphere of diversity; however its negative effect had to be anticipated. When the developers could build whatever they want to maximize their own interests, an overall development control was absent. As a result, the whole area lost its target service population. Everything was included in this area: residence, office, commercial space, entertainment, but none of them was attractive enough. Diversity was indeed created by the various functions however people lost their willingness to use them. Even without an overall development control plan, this situation could also be prevented if some agreement could be made between those developers in advance. However, the chance was missed.

The development framework of Bugis Junction was applied in Riverside Village. Apart from planning and urban design, the government also utilized land sale to achieve its development policy objectives. The land parcels were deliberately divided into small parcels and sold to different developers. Although this measure did not work in an effective way, this action demonstrated that the land sale as an indispensable level of development process had been integrated into the multi-level control system of the government.

In Central Mall, most of the urban design guidelines, both for conservation and new construction, were complied with and this is reflected in the completed project. The shop-houses and warehouses were restored and adaptively used, the new buildings were built at the permissible height and the pedestrian system proposed in urban design was mostly realized. The completion of the urban environment within Riverside Village proved that it is possible to build an integrated urban environment between different developments by setting proper guidelines in advance and supervising the implementation process. In Central Mall, the government's control played a leading role during the architecture design process and guaranteed the final realization of the urban design.

3.3.7.3 Avoidable negative impacts

Besides planning and urban design, a building outside the area also had negative impact on this area. It is a transformer station that belonged to the Land Transport Authority (LTA). The five storey building is located at the corner of Merchant Road and Clemenceau Avenue. (Figure 3-43:) It is situated just beside the Po Chak Keng Temple and blocked all the views of Riverside Village from Clemenceau Avenue, an important visual linkage between Riverside Village and the city.

This is not the only case that a building of this kind takes up prime land in the city and brings about negative impact to its surroundings. Another example could be found just across the bridge. It is another service building that belonged to LTA. It stands at the corner of River Valley Road and Clemenceau Avenue, another piece of prime land with high development potential.

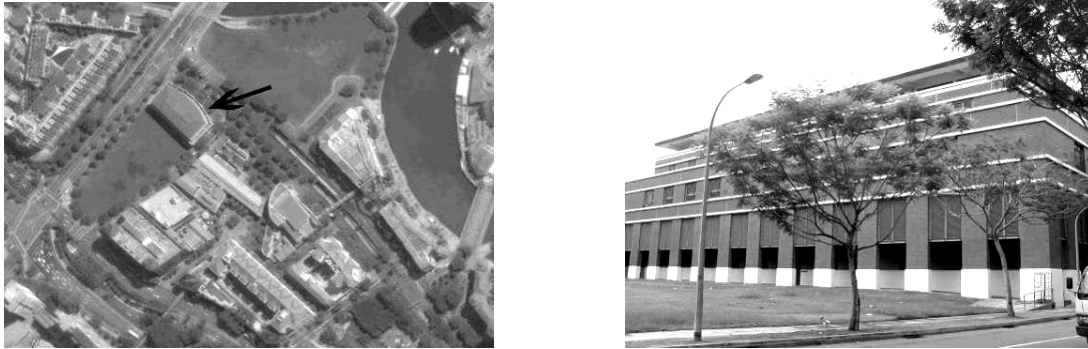


Figure 3-43: The LTA service building at the corner of the road junction

3.3.7.4 Illumination for the future

Lessons could be distilled from the development process of Riverside Village. The most important one should be from planning and urban design. First, at the planning level, not only planning concept, but also specific situations of particular areas should be carefully considered. At the urban design level, land sale policy could be applied as a tool for the realization of urban design. However, its feasibility could greatly affect the final outcome. Third, some public space could be created by proper urban design control measures.

3.4 Case Four: Far East Square

Far East Square is located in one of the seven land parcels in China Square. (Figure 3-44) China Square is the area located between the CBD and the Chinatown Conservation Area. Developed in the late 1990s, Today's China Square has been constructed as a mixed used transition area between the CBD and the Chinatown Conservation Area. (Figure 3-45)



Figure 3-44 : The bird view of China Square and Far East Square
(Source: DP Architects, amended by the author)



Figure 3-45 : The location of China Square (source: Google Earth, amended by the author)

3.4.1 Historical review

China Square, as part of Telok Ayer, is an important part of historic Chinatown, and one of Singapore's earliest urbanized areas. Before Raffles landing in 1819, there was already a small group of Chinese living on this island while Malay people constituted the biggest

part of local population. Most of them stayed in areas near the mouth of the Singapore River. ¹³¹

After Raffles declared Singapore a free port, Chinese immigration began to boom. By 1821, the Chinese population had expanded to 1,159, constituting 25% of the total population. ¹³² From this period, Telok Ayer became the main settlement for Chinese.

Rapid increase of Chinese population made Raffles consider the necessity to designate specific place for their settlement. In 1822, after three years of preparation, Raffles drew up a Town Plan for Singapore. In this Town Plan, areas south of Singapore River were designated as “Chinese Kampong” to accommodate the Chinese population. ¹³³



Figure 3-46: 1822 Town Plan
(Source: National Archives of Singapore, amended by the author)

¹³¹ Tan, *Streets of Old Chinatown* : Singapore. P.30

¹³² Urban Redevelopment Authority (Singapore), *Historic Districts in the Central Area : A Manual for Chinatown Conservation Area* (Singapore: : Urban Redevelopment Authority, 1988). P1

¹³³ In Raffle's written Instructions in 1822 to Capt. Davis (President) and Messrs. Bonham and A. L. Johnson (Members), he had expressed this intention as From the number of Chinese already settled, and the peculiar attractions of the place for that industrious race, it may be presumed that they will always form by far the largest portion of the community. The whole therefore of that part of the town to the south west of the Singapore River (not excepted as above) is intended to be appropriated for the accommodation. Buckley, *An Anecdotal History of Old Times in Singapore* : (with Portraits and Illustrations) from the Foundation of the Settlement under the Honourable the East India Company, on February 6th, 1819, to the Transfer of the Colonial Office as Part of the Colonial Possessions of the Crown on April 1st, 1867. p83

One point that should be noted here is that in this Town Plan, the location of the “Chinese Kampong” coincide exactly with much of today’s China Square area ¹³⁴ rather than today’s Chinatown Conservation Area. (Figure 3-46)

In the master plan draw by Lt. Jackson in 1828, most main roads of China Square had already been indicated while most areas of today’s Chinatown Conservation Area were undeveloped. From the configuration of the roads, it could be discerned that the natural landscape had an important impact on the setting of the roads. One road, which probably was today’s Amoy Street, went south to north along one side of Ann Siang Hill. South Bridge Road was on the other side. Telok Ayer Street paralleled Amoy Street and coastline. The direction of Church Street, which was the north boundary of today’s China Square, was already fixed, perpendicular to the coastline. (Figure 3-47)

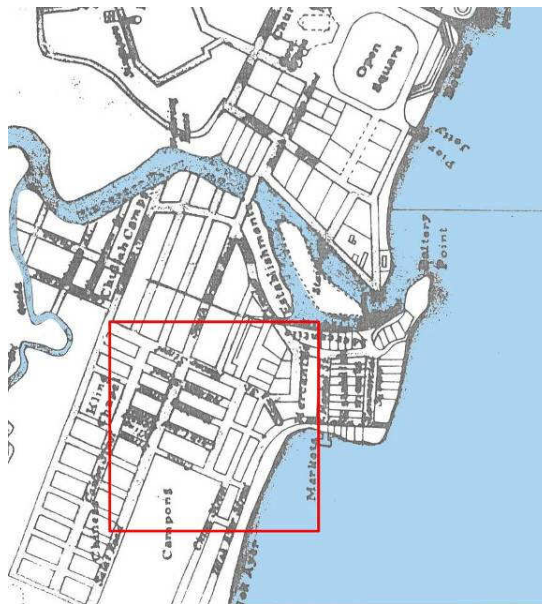


Figure 3-47 : The master plan of Singapore town in 1828
(Source: National Archives of Singapore, amended by the author)

¹³⁴ The other part of China Square area was still water at that time.

The Chinese population continued to increase in the 1930s. In 1836, it increased to 13,749 or 46% of the total population.¹³⁵ In 1836, a map was drawn by George Drumgold Coleman, who was the first Government Superintendent of Public Works from 1833 to 1841¹³⁶. The map indicated that areas between Singapore River and Cross Street, which is today's China Square, was at the heart of most developed areas. (Figure 3-48)

By late 1840s, despite the growing Chinese population, the area of settlement was largely kept the same as 1836. Hence, density was doubled compared to 1830s. The map drawn by J.T.Thomson in 1846 showed that in this period Chinatown was mainly demarcated by Telok Ayer Street, Singapore River, New Bridge Road and Pagoda Street. (Figure 3-49)

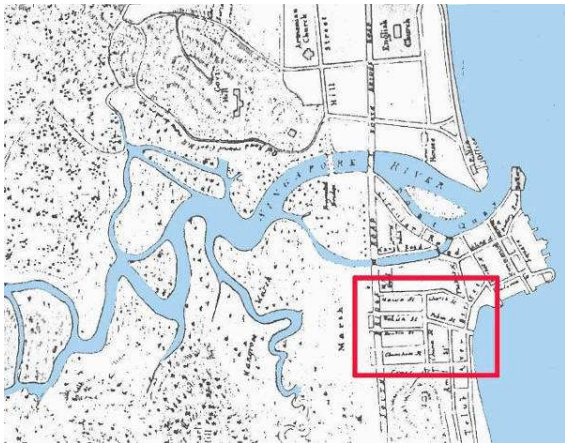


Figure 3-48 : The 1836 map
(Source: National Archives of Singapore,
amended by the author)

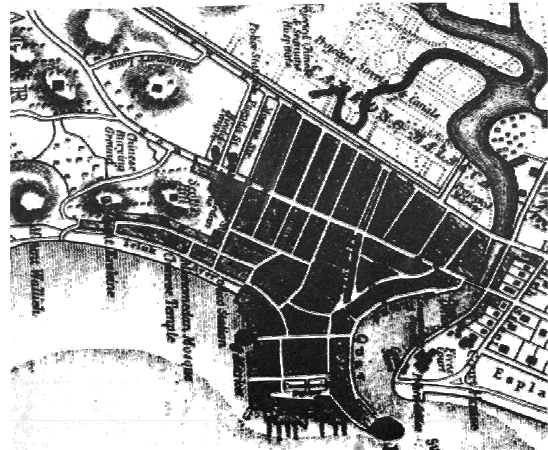


Figure 3-49: The developed areas in 1846
(Source: Singapore. Archives and Oral History
Dept.Chinatown : An Album of a Singapore
Community)

During the 1860s, the construction of infrastructures in and around the city greatly influenced the urban development of Singapore. The urbanization of the city began to expand southwestward, from the Telok Ayer area to Kreta Ayer area. In 1869, the

¹³⁵ Urban Redevelopment Authority (Singapore), *Historic Districts in the Central Area : A Manual for Chinatown Conservation Area*. P1

¹³⁶ Ibid.

opening of the Suez Canal stimulated the flourish of port activities in Singapore. While new harbor was constructed south of the city, port related activities expanded to Tanjong Pagar area. Roads connecting the new harbor area to the city were built such as Tanjong Pagar Road and Anson Road.¹³⁷ In 1886, the first steam tram linking the new harbor and the city started operation.¹³⁸ The direction of urban expansion was deeply affected by these events. While more people lived on port activities, the construction of infrastructures also facilitated them to move, from the old town towards the new harbor area, and the city began to expand southwards, along those infrastructures. During this time, the Chinese population increased significantly. The population reached 164,041 in 1901.¹³⁹ For most of the new immigrants, areas between the port and the old town became the ideal settlement destinations.



Figure 3-50: Chinatown in 1904
(Source: National Archives of Singapore, Amended by the author)

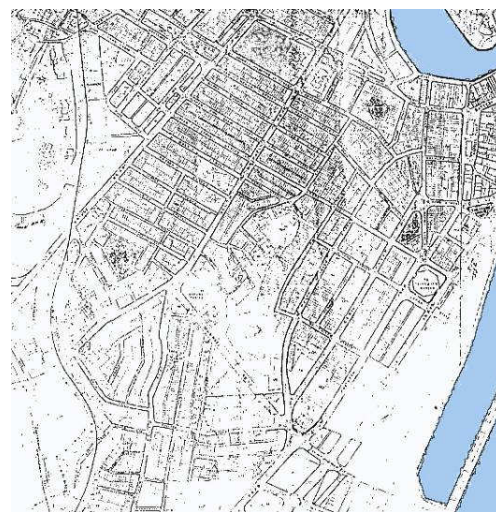


Figure 3-51: Chinatown in 1931
(Source: National Archives of Singapore, Amended by the author)

¹³⁷ *ibid* p12

¹³⁸ Tan, *Streets of Old Chinatown : Singapore*. P30

¹³⁹ Urban Redevelopment Authority (Singapore), *Historic Districts in the Central Area : A Manual for Chinatown Conservation Area*. p12

In 1904, Kreta Ayer area had been occupied. (Figure 3-50) By 1931, intensive settlements expanded to Tanjong Pagar and Bukit Pasoh areas. (Figure 3-51) The shape of today's Chinatown was formed and the heart of it also moved from Telok Ayer area to Kreta Ayer area.

As the oldest part of Chinatown, the unique character of China Square area began to form from 1820s and this character was closely related to the people who settled there. The first Chinese junk reached this area from Xiamen. The name Amoy Street was probably named after this place. After settling down, the first activity they did was to give thanks to the gods for the long and safe journey as well as asking for more blessing.¹⁴⁰ Hence, Fuk Tak Chi Temple was built along Telok Ayer Street in 1820 and was probably the oldest temple in today's Chinatown. The second oldest temple was Wak Hai Cheng Temple. It was built by Teochew people in 1826. Located on Philip Street, it was used by Teochew traders, sailors and fishermen for getting god's protection during their voyages. Apart from praying, this place was also used as a gathering place for advice and assistance or exchange news from their hometown.¹⁴¹

Throughout the 19th and the first half of 20th centuries, China Square area developed into a variety of activities especially traditional trades and services. Different streets developed different characters. China Street was originally a gathering place for gangsters and gambling dens. After gambling was strictly controlled by the government

¹⁴⁰ Tan, *Streets of Old Chinatown : Singapore*. P31

¹⁴¹ Lowe-Ismail, Leung, and Singapore Heritage Society., *Chinatown Memories*. P.12

in the 1940s, this street was famous for its Hokkien bakeries.¹⁴² Hokkien Street was rich in traditional foods such as spring roll skin pancakes and Hokkien noodles.¹⁴³ In Pekin Street, there used to be some sign carvers.¹⁴⁴ Chin Chew Street was the settlement for a special group: the red-hatted women or Samsui women.¹⁴⁵ *They used to squat early in the morning on the corner of South Bridge Road waiting for a truck to transport them to their construction sites for their day's toil.*¹⁴⁶

Among all the streets, Telok Ayer Street, as the earliest coastline, developed as an early worship and business centre. There are five places for worship along today's Telok Ayer Street: Thian Hock Keng Temple, Nagore Durgha Shrine, Al-Abrar Mosque, Fuk Tak Chi Temple and Chinese Methodist Church. Except the last one, the other four were built before 1845 when this street was still part of the coastline.¹⁴⁷ The early coastal location also facilitated this street to be an ideal place for business. After the first settlement, this place *soon became the centre of Singapore's entrepot trade.*¹⁴⁸ From the turn of the 20th century, merchants began to move their home from Telok Ayer Street to other places because of deteriorating living conditions. However, most of them would leave their business at Telok Ayer. This place became a kind of central business district in a traditional context.

¹⁴² These bakeries were known for their festival cakes like the Chinese New Year nien ko and a variety of mooncakes and temple offerings like candy pagodas and neon-colored, sugar-coated cookies. Ibid p34

¹⁴³ Ibid

¹⁴⁴ Ibid

¹⁴⁵ As a group of female laborers, most of them came from Samsui in Guangdong province. Quite a number of them were unmarried or escaped from engaged marriages. Wearing black samfu, a kind of traditional Chinese pantsuit, and red hat, they were easy to be recognized. Tan, *Streets of Old Chinatown : Singapore*. P34

¹⁴⁶ Lowe-Ismail, Leung, and Singapore Heritage Society., *Chinatown Memories*. P29

¹⁴⁷ From the current direction of these four buildings, it is evident to believe that when they were built, all of them were facing the sea directly. This is probably related to the content of the early praying: the safe journey in sea

¹⁴⁸ *Chinese towkays set up their homes and offices there and daily life was marked by the hustle of brokers and the coming and going of cargo.* Tan, *Streets of Old Chinatown : Singapore*. P68

The South Bridge Road, located at the eastern edge of China Square area, played another active role in the area. This road had already been indicated in the 1828 Master Plan, however, its significance was greatly prompted by a tramway built in 1880s.¹⁴⁹ Connecting the new harbor area to the old town, this tramway made South Bridge Road a vital traffic artery between the two. The areas along this road began to flourish from the beginning of the 20th century. Community buildings such as schools, associations and temples gradually appeared along this road. The traditional shops along this road thronged the streetscape. (Figure 3-52)



Figure 3-52 : The street-scape of South Bridge Road
(Source: Singapore. Archives and Oral History Dept., *Chinatown : An Album of a Singapore Community = Niu Che Shui*)

The prosperity of this road brought more activities to the west part of China Square while most of its activities concentrated on the east side along Telok Ayer Street in earlier years. A good example was Ning Yeung Hui Guan¹⁵⁰. It was located at the corner of South Bridge Road and Hokkien Street. Activities in this building included music classes, Tai

¹⁴⁹ This tramway ran along Tanjong Pagar Road, North and South Bridge Roads and ended in Geylang. Urban Redevelopment Authority (Singapore), *Historic Districts in the Central Area : A Manual for Chinatown Conservation Area*. P12

¹⁵⁰ It was built in 1822 as an assembly hall and temple for people from the Toi San District of China, near Canton Province. This building was renamed as Ning Yeuan Guan in 1846, and changed back to Ning Yeung Hui Guan in 1894

Chi martial art as well as setting up of scholarship and welfare funds for fellow members of the association. (Figure 3-53) It was demolished in 1964.

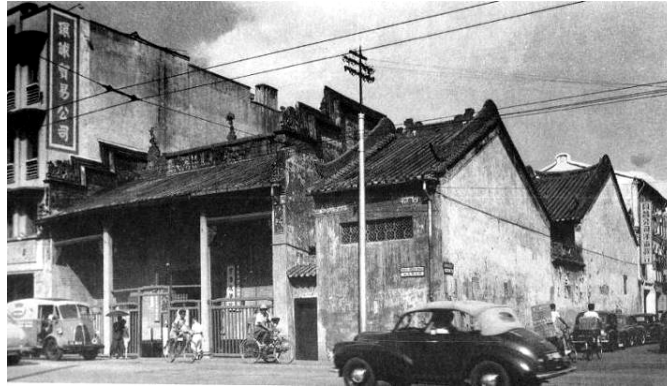


Figure 3-53 : Ning Yeung Hui Guan in 1950s
(Source: Singapore. Archives and Oral History Dept., Chinatown : An Album of a Singapore Community = Niu Che Shui)

Apart from Ning Yeung Hui Guan, there also used to be a large open space surrounded by shop-houses near Amoy Street. This place was used as a popular outdoor food centre which gave rise to the name of “China Square”

From the historical development of Telok Ayer area, which is where today’s China Square is located, it could be found that this area had been the center of the Chinese settlement before 1869. The coastal location facilitated the concentration of temples and commercial activities in the Telok Ayer area. Although the center of Chinese settlement moved towards the southwest, the Telok Ayer area had developed its own urban character with the various urban activities and unique features. Its historical significance is no less than the Kreta Ayer area, which is where today’s Chinatown Conservation Area is located.

Because of the deteriorating living conditions, the urban renewal programme aiming at population decentralization began from the end of 1950s. Most population in this area

moved out from the end of 1950s to the beginning of 1970s. The urgent squatter problem was relieved. At the end of 1970s, this area was compulsory acquired by the government. While all the business and people were cleared out, rows of shop-houses were left empty and waiting for further development.

3.4.2 Development Policy

The earliest development intention for this area was conceived in the late 1970s. When this area was compulsory acquired by the government, it was supposed to be divided into large parcels to cater to commercial development. This intention was reviewed during the 1980s.

From the mid-1980s, the attitude towards old shop-houses changed in Singapore. From 1986, the URA embarked on extensive conservation programme to conserve and restore Singapore's architectural heritage. In 1989, ten areas were given the status of conservation area, including Chinatown, Kampong Glam and Little India. Detailed guidelines were issued to restore historical buildings.

Planning and conceptualization for current developments at China Square started from the late eighties when URA was re-looking into the development possibilities for this area. A new plan was unveiled in the early 1990s which was nearly one decade after the land was compulsory acquired. During these years, the buildings in China Square remained empty and kept deteriorating naturally. Before the development, most existing buildings were in dilapidated conditions. (Figure 3-54)



Figure 3-54 : China Square area before development (Source: URA)

During URA’s initial planning studies, the historic and architectural value of the existing buildings were taken into account and weighed against the redevelopment potential of the land. Several approaches were considered. In the “maximum development” approach, none of the existing buildings would be retained as the land would be developed for new commercial buildings with large footprints. However, the architectural and historical character of the area would be lost. In the “minimum development” approach, all the existing buildings could be retained and sold in smaller parcels. However, this would result in the loss of development potential and new areas would have to be found to cater for the expansion of the financial district.

The development approach which URA finally decided on was a combination of new development and selective conservation, whereby about half of the existing buildings were retained and combined with vacant land parcels to accommodate large developments. The selection of buildings for conservation involved the evaluation of the architectural merits, historical significance and structural condition of the buildings, the

vacant land parcels, on the other hand, were of a sufficiently large size to allow new commercial buildings with a typical footprint of around 2000 square meters.

3.4.3 Urban design



Figure 3-55: Perspective of China Square
(Source: URA, *Skylines*, Mar/Apr, 1999)

The urban design concept was to create a high-rise edge consisting of new 15-storey buildings on the periphery, with a low-rise spine of conserved buildings flanking a central pedestrian mall. The area closer to Cecil Street was proposed for 30-storey high-rise developments as complement of existing high-rise buildings within the Business District. (Figure 3-55)

In such urban design perspective, when it is fully developed, this area is envisaged to become a vibrant activity hub forming a transitional zone between Chinatown, Singapore River and the Central Business District. The combination of conserved buildings and new developments within large integrated parcels would result in an interesting contrast between the old and the new.

The entire area was divided into seven parcels, according to the existing streets. (Figure 3-56) Parcels closer to Raffles Place were prepared for predominantly office development in order to meet the demand for prime office space in the existing downtown. Parcels closer to Chinatown were proposed for mixed-use developments with shops, offices, eating and entertainment. Parcel B was designated as a food centre to serve office workers in the vicinity. To provide car parking facilities for visitors to China Square and Chinatown, a multi-storey car park station was also included in one of the development parcels, Parcel C.

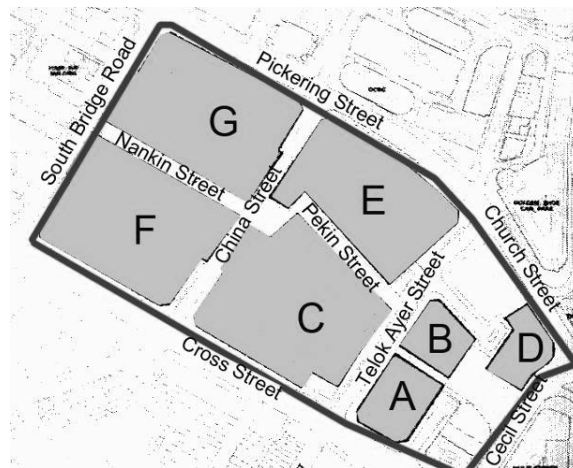


Figure 3-56 : The seven parcels of China Square
(Source: URA, Tender's package of China Square, amended by the author)

A pedestrian mall was introduced as a key urban element. To facilitate pedestrian movement and to bring more activity into this area, Nankin Street and Pekin Street were planned to be closed and converted into a tree-lined mall terminating at the proposed park along Cecil Street. The conserved buildings flanking the mall were required to have activity generating uses on the first storey. Outdoor eating would also be allowed along the mall. The intention was to create an activity spine down the centre of China Square, generating life and activity both day and night.

Pedestrian access to China Square would be further enhanced by underpasses to be built under the surrounding major roads. These underpasses would link China Square to Chinatown, Raffles Place and the Singapore River area.

All the urban design concepts were crystallized into a set of detailed guide plans.¹⁵¹ All the planning and urban design proposals were exhibited to the public at the Orchard Point shopping centre in October 1994. Public feedback which was obtained from this exhibition was collected and evaluated. Some suggestions were taken into account when preparing the detailed proposals.

3.4.4 Land sale

After planning and urban design, the area was sold by open tender to private developers. The sale lasted almost 2 years, from Mar 1995 to May 1997. The price ranged from \$7,662.16 per square meter to \$164,673.51 per square meter. The high price proved the potential value of the land on one hand; on the other hand, it somehow anticipated more economical pressure for future developments, especially for conservation development. The general facts of the sale are shown in the table below. (Table 3-5)

¹⁵¹ Please refer to Appendix 4

parcel	A	B	C	D	E	F	G
Site area (sq m)	3077.5	2220.00	14000	1998.5	11097	13918.7	13554.1
Proposed Use	“white” site—commercial or Commercial/ Residential or Hotel	Food centre/ Restaurant	Commercial and Car Park Station	Commercial	Commercial or Commercial& Hotel or commercial& Residential	“white” site—commercial or Commercial& Residential or Hotel	“white” site—commercial or Commercial/ Residential or Hotel or medical center(excluding hospital and Sanatorium)
Lease	99years	30years	99years	99years	99years	99years	99years
GFA (sq m)	42655	5044.3	3500(new) 1500(ORA) 15500 (conversation)	27700	35310(new) 5670 (conversation)	40110(new) 8440 (conservation)	26020(new) 14280 (conservation)
Sale date	13 Mar 1996	27 Mar 1995	27 Mar 1995	18 Oct 1995	18 Oct 1995	6 Nov 1996	14 May 1997
Successful Tenderer	Development Bank of Singapore Ltd	Wah Khiaw Development Pte Ltd	Victory Realty Co. Pte Ltd (subsidiary of Far East Org)	SSL Properties Pte Ltd	SSL Properties Pte Ltd	Merevale Holdings Pte Ltd	Merevale Holdings Pte Ltd and The Great Eastern Life Assurance Company Ltd
Tendered Price (total)	\$367,310,736.00 (\$119,353.61 psm)	\$17,010,000.00 (\$7,662.16 psm)	\$111,000,000.00 (\$7928.57 psm)	\$329,100,000.00 (\$164,673.51 psm)	\$392,100,000.00 (\$35,333.87 psm)	\$308,000,100.00 (\$22,028.80 psm)	\$340,050,000.00 (\$8,437.97 psm)

Table 3-5 Sale facts

3.4.5 Architecture Design

Far East Square is located in Parcel C. (Figure 3-57) It was among the earliest parcels which were developed. This parcel is located in the area bounded by Cross Street, China Street, Pekin Street and Telok Ayer Street. (Figure 3-59) It was purchased by Victory Realty Cooperative Pte Limited, a subsidiary of Far East Organization, in Mar 1995. DP Architects was invited to carry out the architecture design.

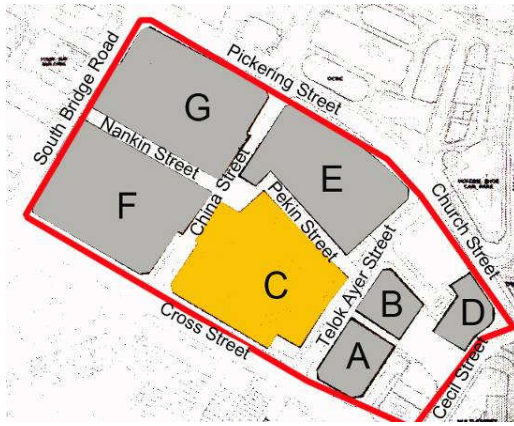


Figure 3-57 : Parcel C of China Square
(Source: URA, Tender's Package, amended by the author)



Figure 3-58: The location of Far East Square
(Source: Google Earth, amended by the author)

In the urban design guidelines for this parcel, three points were stressed. The first is the commercial and car park station. The developer was required to provide new commercial space in an excellent location just next to Raffles Place. The second point was to introduce outdoor refreshment areas in order to contribute to the night-time activity in the area. The third point was that the development should incorporate a multi-storey car park station with the first storey as shops to not only cater for its own car parking requirements but also to serve other developments in this area.

The developer's initial development concept was to create a commercial development within the Central Business District that could become an attraction to tourists and locals alike. The developer further stressed that the development should maintain a strong Chinese theme and become a destination after office hours, during the weekends and public holidays like Boat Quay and Clarke Quay.

The existing condition of parcel C itself was that it contained the largest number of conservation buildings among the seven parcels, ie. 61 two- and three-storey shop-houses of architectural styles ranging from Early to Art Deco Styles, the former Fuk Tak Chi Temple, the Chor Eng Institute (the first Chinese School), was immediately next to the Telok Ayer conservation area.

The architect's own design intention was to create and stress the contrast of conserved shop-houses and its modern counterpart. After looking into all the terms and conditions from URA and the developer, the architect found there were some challenges. Firstly, in the conservation plan given by URA, over sixty shop-houses should be conserved in the site, which limited the architect's design scope within the constraints of existing structures. Most frontages of these conserved shop-houses were along China Street, Pekin Street and Telok Ayer Street. In other words, the majority of the shop-houses were facing the inside of the site. Hence, this project had to create enough attraction to draw people from outside to inside rather than pleasing the passers only. (Figure 3-59)

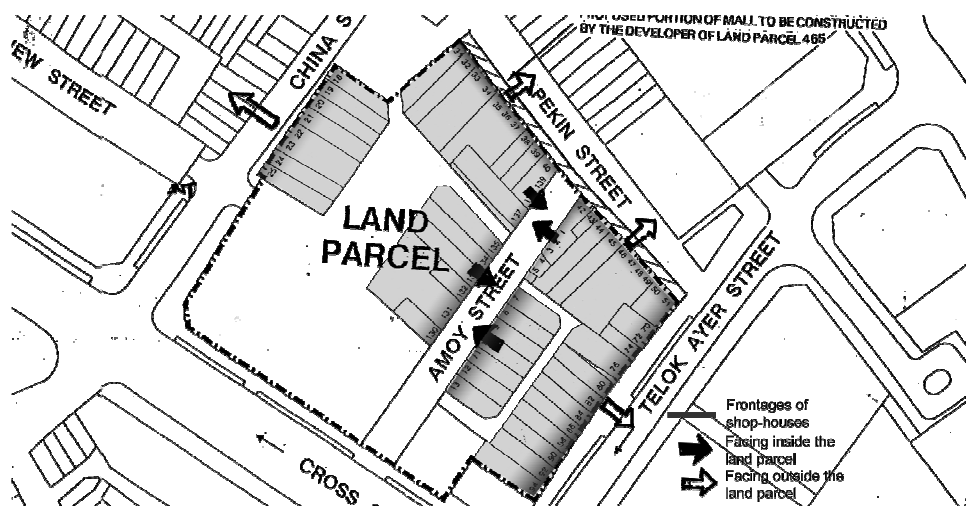


Figure 3-59 : Frontages of shop-houses in Parcel C
(Source: Goh Boon Kheng Andrew, "Far East Square: A Professional Case Study," amended by the author)

Secondly, according to the developer's requirements, this project was supposed to be a counterpart of the Boat Quay and Clarke Quay as a destination after office hours, during the weekends and public holidays. However; different from Boat Quay and Clarke Quay, apart from the conserved shop-houses, there was no natural element like Singapore River to add more attraction into this area. In addition, the height control of the car parking station and land use of the first floor, which was commercial, made it difficult to create enough car parking units.

After having comprehensively considered all advantages and constraints, a design proposal was finally formed. One focus of the proposal was the use of the upper storey of the reserved shop-houses. Because of the poor retail market conditions of the upper storey, it was reserved for office use. From the view point of economical aspects, the rent of these offices could be set between the most popular office in CBD and the much lower rental office in Chinatown. In addition, those offices could also relieve the shortage of car parking space in this area since less car park units were required for office use than commercial use.

All the second floor offices were connected by a corridor on the second level together with their own entrances and foyers facing the outside. In that case, both the shoppers and office workers could conduct their own activities separately without any interference. It was an effective strategy to promote the commercial value for both offices and shops.

The first storey was conserved to have more entertainment and retail activities. Activities were also encouraged on streets and open areas by adding street furniture and signs, allowing contemporary stalls and extending eating areas onto the streets. Some usages,

such as the cineplexes, which need large numbers of car-parking provisions were proposed for the site. Cultural activities and promotions were emphasized in the open air to enhance the historical atmosphere of the area. All the activities were provided not only for the tourists but also the local people.

Apart from the usage and activities, another issue of the proposal was how to deal with the relationship between the old and the new in form. There was a car park station stipulated in the urban design guidelines. In the Technical Conditions of the Tender, the word 'harmony' was stressed when talking about the car-park station and the 4-storey commercial block. A building which responded and blended with the surrounding shop-houses was envisaged. It was supposed to extend and reinforce the continuous scale of the shop-houses along Amoy Street from the urban design point of view. In the design proposal, the architect took another approach. For the proposed car-park station, glass was applied on the surface. Other new structures were designed in a typical modern architecture language. Glass and steel constituted the main materials of this building. This proposal was submitted to the Design Review Committee and the Architectural Design Panel for review which delayed the provisional proposal approval by almost 3 months. Finally, the proposal was accepted as it was considered as an honest expression of the function of the building.¹⁵²

The architect strongly suggested to the authorities and the developers to delete the commercial block which was required in the guidelines or at least to include it in the car-park station. The reason was that, it would seriously destroy the visual lines from Cross

¹⁵² Goh Boon Kheng Andrew, "Far East Square: A Professional Case Study," (DP Architects Pte Ltd, 1997).

Street into the site. If this block was deleted, the shop-houses and street activities would be more visible from Cross Street and the open plaza could be utilized for informal performance which would help draw more pedestrians along Amoy Street, Telok Ayer Street and Cross Street. After the architect explained those considerations to the developer and authority, the construction of the commercial block was eventually cancelled. (Figure 3-60)

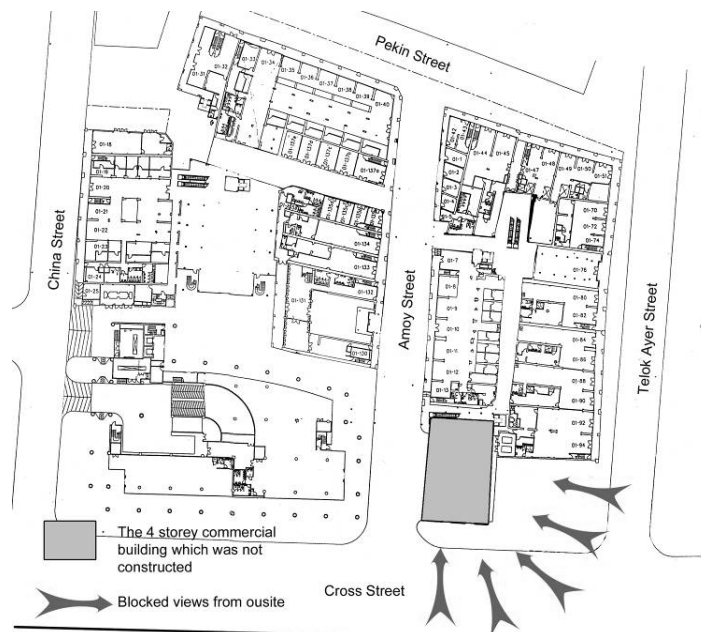


Figure 3-60: The original location of the commercial block

Another heated point was about the outdoor eating areas. In the Technical Conditions of Tender, there was some constraint on outdoor eating area, which was 1500 square meters maximum. However, such an area made it difficult to utilize the square and Amoy Street intensively to generate sufficient crowd activity like Boat Quay. Within 1500 square meters, only the usage along Amoy Street and other minor areas in back-lanes was possible. The proposed square (Figure 3-61) which was in the middle of shop-houses would have to remain largely devoid of any activities because of its poor accessibility.

Hence, the architects concentrated the permissible 1500 square meters on Amoy Street and back-lanes of that street instead of distributing it across all the open areas. (Figure 3-61:)

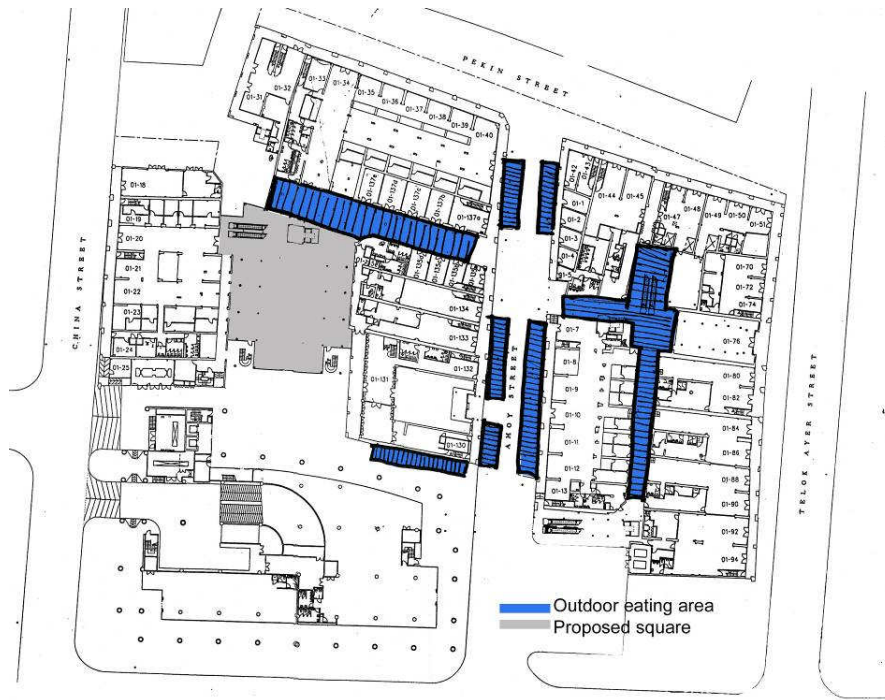


Figure 3-61: Outdoor eating area distribution
(Source: Goh Boon Kheng Andrew, "Far East Square: A Professional Case Study," amended by the author)

Since the square had not enough potential to draw people in if it was left as an open public area, a roof was added over it. As a big pavilion for promotions of the arts and culture activities, the roof could benefit the public as well as the tenants of the development. To make the dull rear facades and end walls that faced the majority of the open spaces more attractive, the glass roof also extended along Amoy Street and some back-lanes.(Figure 3-62) When the glass roof was added over the traditional shop-houses, the differences between the two styles of different times were emphasized.(Figure 3-63)



Figure 3-62 : Open space with & without roof
 (Source: Goh Boon Kheng Andrew, "Far East Square: A Professional Case Study," amended by the author)



Figure 3-63 : The roof over the shop-houses

Conflicted with the GFA requirements, the architects appealed to the URA for some exemption on GFA calculations since the roofed square was dedicated for the public use. The developer also showed their support for the design proposal by acceding that the culture pavilion would be managed by non-profit organizations. Finally additional GFA for the pavilion was conditionally permitted under institutional use which was much lower than commercial usage premium.¹⁵³ In URA's words, *the pavilion was allowed as the intention was to use it for cultural performances which would contribute to the national arts scene and draw even more people to the area. The modern treatment provided contrast with the conservation buildings, and served to reinforce the "old and new" concept for China Square.*¹⁵⁴

All the efforts made by the architect, developer and the URA share one objective: to achieve both commercial and social benefit in this project. The refurbishment of Fuk Tak Chi Temple is another example to integrate the commercial benefits and public good in one project. Fuk Tak Chi Temple as one of the oldest temple of Singapore was built in 1824. In this project, it was refurbished as a public museum exhibiting the history of Chinese immigration. Though 120,000 was invested to the items for display, as a new tourist interests, the commercial opportunities it bring into the site had already exceeded its initial investment.

¹⁵³ Condition added was that no commercial usage would be allowed in the area and the pavilion should be run by a non-profit organization

¹⁵⁴ Andrew, "Far East Square: A Professional Case Study."

3.4.6 After completion

The project was completed in 1998 and awarded the 1999 URA Architecture Heritage Awards. Today, lunch time is the busiest period of the day for this project. This place has become a lunch destination for people working in CBD. For most part of the day, there would be some people relaxing there, either shopping or sitting. A constant pedestrian flow was maintained through Amoy Street.¹⁵⁵ (Figure 3-64) However, after nine o'clock in the evening, the place is totally quiet, since its support population from the CBD has left.



Figure 3-64 : The Amoy Street

The pavilion that is supposed to be used for public purpose only is not utilized in an effective way. Most of time, it is locked. Only on special days, such as festivals, it is used as a performance venue.

3.4.7 Lessons learnt

3.4.7.1 Revised land use

¹⁵⁵ From 3:50 pm to 4:00 pm, there were over 70 pedestrians passing through Amoy Street on a working day.

At planning level, China Square area was defined as a transition between the CBD and Chinatown. The functions of the CBD and Chinatown were naturally mixed in this area. However, to have office use in this area might not be the most rational choice. When this area was compulsory acquired, residential use, in the form of HDB buildings at that time, was determined to be the prime land use for this area. This intention was clearly shown on the 1985 Master Plan. In this plan, residential use was the predominant land use for this area with limited commercial use at the edges. Not only China Square area, but also most areas of Chinatown were dedicated to residential use. The area east of Telok Ayer Street, including Marina South was reserved for future CBD.

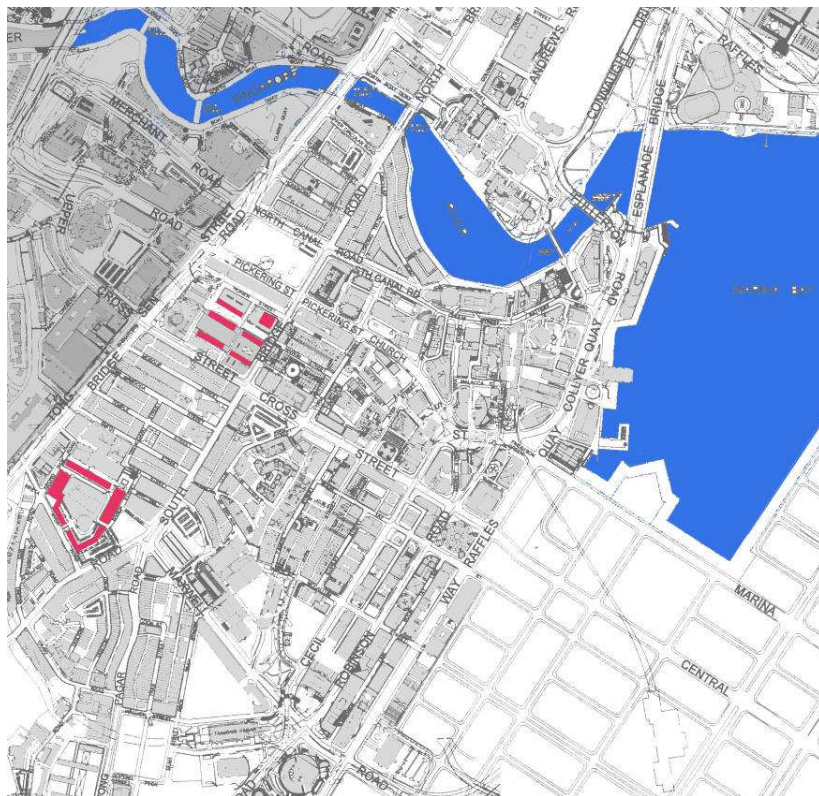


Figure 3-65 : Residential south of Singapore River in central area
(Source: URA, 2005 Map, amended by the author)

By the time of early 1990s, areas north and east of China Square were developed as CBD; Chinatown, which was south of China Square, was conserved and most of the buildings were adapted into shops and restaurants. Only limited housing exists between New Bridge Road and the seafront in southern part of central area. (Figure 3-65)

When commercial and office occupied most of the land, the proportion of residential use was compressed. In this situation, if some residential use could be introduced in such an area, it could probably bring greater benefits. First, some housing could relieve the stress of transportation. Second, the residential population could provide support for the commercial facilities. Those residents could introduce life into this area during off-office hours. When most areas of central area had been redeveloped already, China Square area became one of the limited chances to bring more housing into central area.

However in the new plan, the previous planning concept was reversed. The main land use for this area was converted to commercial and office. This conversion was mostly driven by immediate market demand. To cater for the booming office market, housing was sacrificed to some extent. This choice directly led to a dead night life not only in China Square, but also adjacent areas.

3.4.7.2 An integrated concept of blending

After the basic planning strategy was decided, the next step was a matter of methodology. A combination of old and new was introduced as a planning concept for the China Square area. At urban design level, this concept was further developed. Urban design for this area was the most complete and detailed among all cases studied in this chapter. Not only

guidelines but also a set of guide plans was issued which was totally absent in previous urban designs.¹⁵⁶

At the architecture design level, the architect of Far East Square proposed a car park building of modern style. In Central Mall, there was also a car park building in such a style, however, the situation was different. In Central mall, the cap park building was connected to the office building next to it. To comply with the style of the office building was a prime aim of the design proposal. In Far East Square, the car-park building was constructed with all shop-houses around. Glass and steel were applied as surface and structural materials. Both of them were more typical modern materials than concrete and stone which were applied in Central Mall. It was demonstrated that contrast was deliberately created and emphasized in Far East Square.

The juxtaposition of a modern car park building and traditional shop-houses was explained by the architect as a new explanation of the 'harmony'. The architect argued that glass and steel would emphasize the traditional aspects of shop-houses which were built in another era. It was a more appropriate approach than 'copying' the old styles to the new buildings because such a blending of styles would create a confused environment where the distinction between the old and new was subdued and the value of the shop-houses would be less appreciated.¹⁵⁷ This argument was not original. As early as 1877 William Morris expressed similar view in the manifesto of the Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings (SPAB), which was a landmark organization in the field of conservation. He notes in the manifesto that *the conditions and surroundings of every*

¹⁵⁶ Please refer to Appendix 4.

¹⁵⁷ Andrew, "Far East Square: A Professional Case Study."

*period are different, so that the motives which act on men of one age cannot govern the production of genuine work conceived in the spirit and embodied in the forms of another... Even were it possible to reproduce lost work, it may be said that...artistic honesty is the best policy, just as much as in other affairs of life. The restorer is in reality committing a forgery.*¹⁵⁸

Based on similar understanding, a roof made of glass and steel was added over the open spaces. It was not the first such roof added over shop-houses. In Bugis Junction, a similar idea had been applied already. However, the glass roof in Far East Square would be the first glass roof covering authentic shop-houses.

3.4.7.3 Exploring the flexibility in a fixed control system

In Far East Square, the government applied the similar control system as Riverside Village. The development policy making, planning, urban design were carried out by the government. Through the land sale, which was also organized by the government, private developer and professional architect were introduced to realize those development policy, plans and urban design in physical form. The government kept its right to supervise the implementation process.

Compared to the Riverside Village, the urban design and land sale policy of China Square was more practical and comprehensive. The conserved shop-houses were distributed by four similar-size parcels. The proportion of conservation and new construction had been calculated to ensure the return of the developers. All these precluded the similar dilemma in land sale as had happened in Riverside Village

¹⁵⁸ Chris Miele and Paul Mellon Centre for Studies in British Art., *From William Morris : Building Conservation and the Arts and Crafts Cult of Authenticity, 1877-1939, Studies in British Art ; V. 14.* (New Haven, Conn. ; London: Yale University Press, 2005). P.337

In the architecture design process of Far East Square, the developer and the architect took a more active attitude towards the guidelines. Rather than passively accepting, they often sought opportunities to express their own opinions about the guidelines. They tried to offer the authority more choices to amend the guidelines in order to achieve better results. The authority was willing to obtain a better result through negotiation and collaboration rather than sticking to rigid guidelines.

Far East Square was developed in a fixed frame; however, the implementation reflected a certain degree of flexibility. During the architecture proposal review process, many adjustments, both about guidelines and design proposal were made. By negotiation and collaboration, problems were tackled and a double-win result was obtained.

3.4.7.4 Illuminations for the future

From Far East Square, several lessons can be drawn. First, the vision of planning should focus on the needs of not only near future but also the distant one. The most urgent demand such as the market should never be the only consideration during planning decision making. Second, though regulations were still the main government control measure, the collaborations during implementation stage would greatly benefit the outcomes. Third, for architects, if properly proposed, sometimes fresh ideas could break some rules and bring new opportunities for the built environment.

3.5 Case Five: China Square Central and Great Eastern Centre

The last case is China Square Central and Great Eastern Centre. Since these two projects are owned by the same developer; designed and constructed at the same time, we regard them as one project in this case study. The combined project is located in parcel F and G of the China Square area. Although this project is almost under the same planning and urban design concepts as Far East Square, its development process reflected another approach of blending old and new. Hence, this project is studied as an independent case in the thesis.



Figure 3-66 : The birdview of China Square Central

3.5.1 Historical review

Please refer to last case

3.5.2 Development Policy

Please refer to last case

3.5.3 Urban design

Please refer to last case

3.5.4 Land sale

Please refer to last case

3.5.5 Architecture design

This case covered two land parcels, F and G. (Figure 3-67) The project located on parcel F is China Square Central, and the Great Eastern Centre is the name of the project of parcel G. Both the two projects were developed by the same developer, the Merevale Holdings Pte Ltd. Parcel F was first sold in November 1996 and six months later Parcel G was sold to the same developer. ADDP Architects was designated as the architect for the two projects. In this thesis, we regard them as one project and apply the name of China Square Central. The site of China Square Central was bounded by South Bridge Road, Pickering Road, China Street and Cross Street. (Figure 3-68)

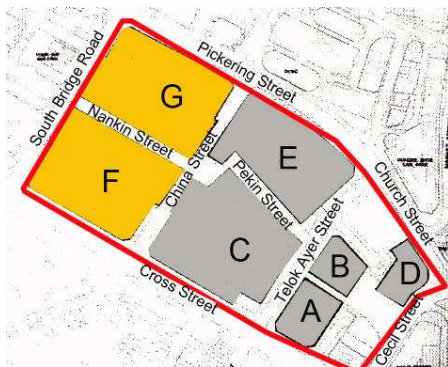


Figure 3-67 : Parcel F&G in China Square
(Source: URA, Tender's Package amended by the author)



Figure 3-68: Location of China Square Central and Great Eastern Centre
(Source: Google Earth, emended by the author)

Regarding the two land parcels as one, the area covered around 27,000 sq m with 108 conserved shop-houses in it. Unlike other parcels, such a big area provided enough

possibilities to conduct huge development which can contain more commercial potential. The developer recognized such potential and decided to embody it in the development. Their main development concept was to create a complex with food, retail, and entertainment together in a huge one stop center. To fulfill this concept, several design ideas were proposed by the architect during the architecture design process.

The first idea was to introduce more residential use into this area. At that time, a new kind of living pattern, live-work space concept began popular, which is what the developer wanted to introduce into this area. Originally from USA, live-work concept meant to work and live in the same place, a place used as office in the daytime and as home at night or weekends. In San Francisco, this kind of living pattern was most famous in an area of inner city called South of Market Street (SOMA) which was next to the CBD. It used to be the home to a warehousing industry which had been relocated elsewhere. The abandoned warehouses were conserved and adapted for re-use as residential “lofts”, which were typically apartment units with open spaces, large windows and high ceilings.. As the community developed and amenities followed, its popularity and its values soared. Inspired by this model, people found that more things could be done in locations close to the CBD with unique architectural values. In Taiwan, this kind of live-work spaces was quite popular by some new IT companies. They provided this particular residence to the programme designers so that they could work at any time they want.

The similar factors did exist in China Square. The unique form of the conservation shop-houses there and its proximity to the CBD were deemed as attractions to locals and

expatriates in the creative industries. The fast paced and deadline-driven nature of such businesses was a potential drive behind the live-work concept.

The aim of the design idea was to create a space that can alternate between office and home at will to accommodate the way of life that the new economy demands. Therefore, in the design proposal initially submitted to URA, the Soho (Small Office/Home Office) units were designed as single-floor studio apartments\office units or as lofts, with small mezzanine floor, such as an existing attic floor overlooking the 2nd storey space. (Figure 3-69) Each unit was conceived as an open space, without partitions except toilet areas and some necessary walls. Partly unfettered by physical constraints, the occupant was free to use spaces within the unit wherever and whenever they suit his requirements and exploit the multi-use of spaces.

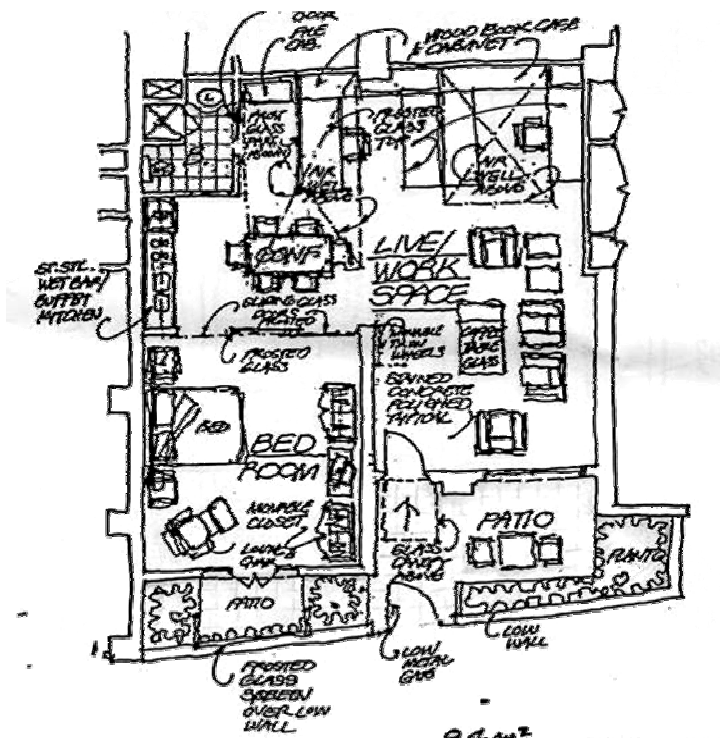


Figure 3-69 : Plan of the Live-work Space
(Source: ADDP Architects)

However, the feasibility of this proposal was challenged by the guidelines. According to related guidelines, apart from the shop-front, part of the party walls between the shop-houses on the second floor should also be retained at a percentage of more than 50%. The retained party wall became the biggest obstacle to create an ideal space for those Live-work units. The architect's appeal for exemption was eventually rejected. The reason given by the URA was that exemption could create unfairness for other developers of China Square. URA's insistence on conservation issues was another reason for the rejection. In fact, the urban design vision of URA included "creating a centre of activity both day and night, offering a wide range of shopping and eating"¹⁵⁹. Residence would be an ideal element to achieve this objective. However, from their point of view, to demolish the party-walls and introducing the live-work units was not the only way to add residence into China Square

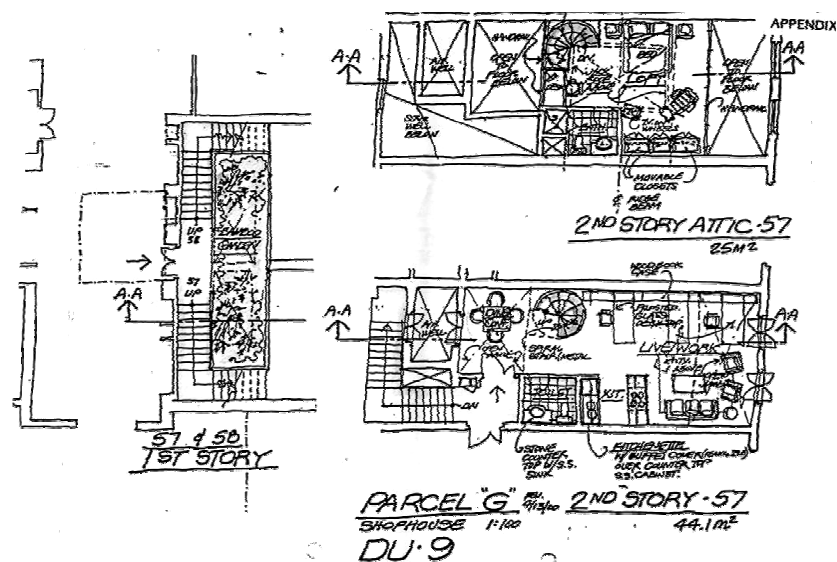


Figure 3-70 : Revised smaller units of Live-work units
(Source: ADDP Architects)

¹⁵⁹ Urban Redevelopment Authority (Singapore), "Revitalizing a Historic Area: China Square a New Chapter," (1994).

Understanding the difficulty of URA, the architect did not give up the initial intention. Adaptive changes were made to fit the live\work units into the upper floor shop-houses. The live-work units were changed into smaller ones within one shop-house. ()

However, high construction fee and fluctuation of market stymied the implementation of this design idea. If all the units were complete, the rent would have to be up to \$4000 a month to recover cost which was unaffordable for most people when the economic crisis happened at that time. Finally most of the second floor and part of the first floor were dedicated to offices. Finally only the landscape design of the back-lanes, which initially was designed for serving the live-work units, was kept and used as the playground of a kindergarten located in the conserved shop-houses. (Figure 3-71)



Figure 3-71 : The back-lanes with landscape

The second design idea was the configuration of public space. The original intention of the architect was to create a new pedestrian corridor. As the start node of this pedestrian

corridor, a square was designed which covered the main central area of the two land parcels, F and G, as well as the street between them, which was supposed to be part of the pedestrian mall in the urban design.

The pedestrian corridor began with the square; extended through parcel G and terminated at the north edge of parcel G, leaving the possibility to extend forward to the Singapore River. (Figure 3-72) If the pedestrian corridor could be realized, a cross-shaped pedestrian system would be created. The arm in the west-east direction was the supposed pedestrian mall in URA's urban design and the other arm in the north-south direction was the new pedestrian corridor.

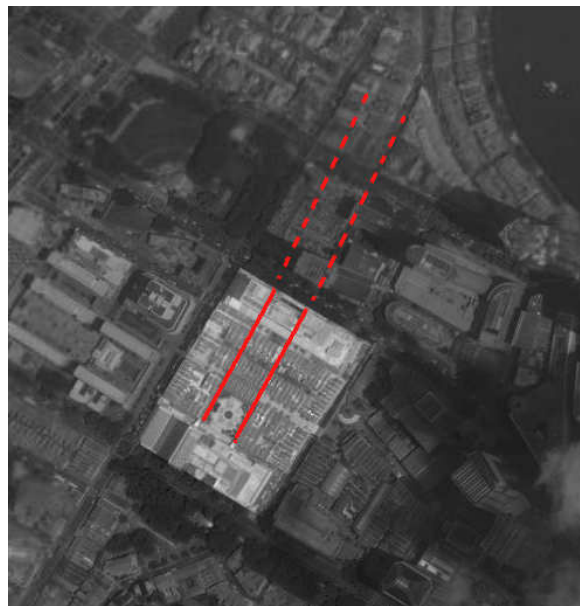


Figure 3-72 : The big pedestrian corridor designed by the architect
(Source: Google Earth, amended by the author)

Consultants were invited by the architect to prove the rationality of having such a square in this district. Considered suggestions of the consultants, URA accepted the existence of such a square as an event venue of this district. However, according to the architect's proposal, 1/4 of existing shop-houses had to be demolished for the construction of the

square and some structural adaptation work would also be conducted for the remaining shop-houses. Most of the content of the architect's appeal for demolition and major structural adaptation work was rejected by URA since this would destroy too many existing shop-houses. After negotiations, the south section of the square was kept on the site of some shop-houses which was already destroyed by fires. The north part of the proposed square was still conserved shop-houses. A small corridor at the first floor of a shop-house, with the dimension of 5 meters wide and 2.5 meters high was left as the remnant of the pedestrian corridor concept. (Figure 3-73)

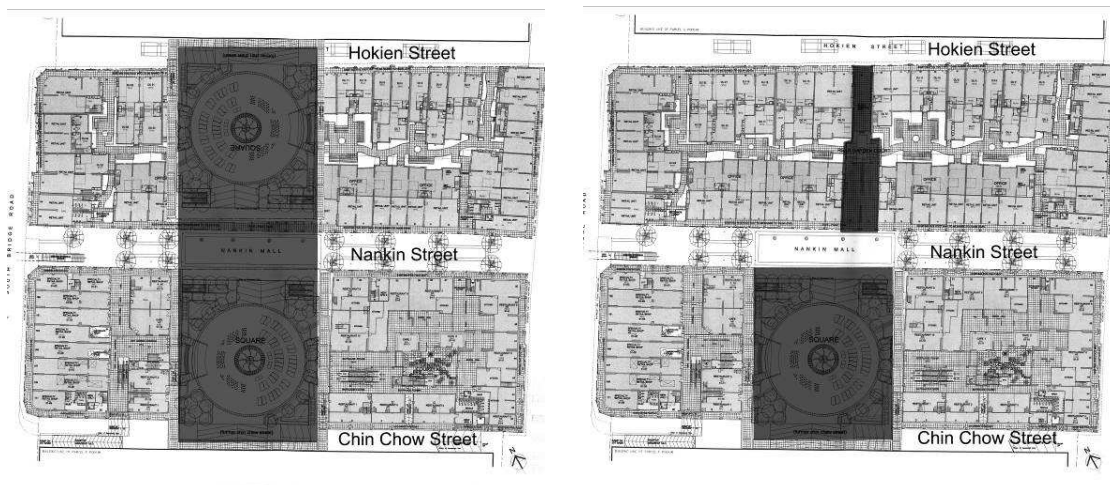


Figure 3-73 : The revise of proposal (Source: ADDP Architects)

In the street between the two parcels, which used to be the core of the crossed pedestrian system in the initial proposal, some glass and steel structures were built as a roof covering the pedestrian mall to remind people of the continuity of the two sites. (Figure 3-74)



Figure 3-74 : The glass roof over Nankin Street

3.5.6 After completion

After completion, the street between two parcels became the activity centre for this project. The adaptive reuse of the shop-houses as restaurants attract people not only from nearby offices, but also from the HDB buildings west of the site. During lunch time and evening, this street is full of people dining or walking through. However at other times of the day, most restaurants along the streets are empty. Though the Nankin Street could keep a constant pedestrian flow,¹⁶⁰ most of them just pass by. Sometimes, performances would be held in the square although most of time it is empty. The fountain in the centre of the square could attract some observers when it is working.

Compared to Far East Square, China Square Central has more façade facing the main pedestrian street. Several HDB buildings are also located west of it which could provide some supportive population. However, since most shop-houses are adapted into restaurants, dining becomes the major activity for this project. Hence, the street-scape

¹⁶⁰ There were over 100 pedestrians passing by between 3:30 pm and 3:40 pm on a weekday.

changes greatly at different times of the day. However, in Far East Square, several kinds of activities are provided which helps to balance the usage and pedestrian flow over the day.

The pedestrian corridor between China Square Central and Singapore River dose not fulfill its purpose. Most people do not know that there is a pedestrian route in China Square that could lead them to Singapore River directly. Only those who work or live in the vicinity would use this route as a short-cut. The reason may be that the scale of the corridor within the shop-houses cannot match the scale of the other two spaces it connects. One of them is the square and the other one is an open space under the office tower. Instead of linkage, it becomes a tunnel between the two open spaces, which in fact blocks the continuity of the “pedestrian corridor”. (Figure 3-75)



Figure 3-75 : The two open spaces (left and right) and the tunnel linking them (middle)

3.5.7 Lessons learnt

3.5.7.1 Disappeared atmosphere of historical streets

Apart from the deficiency at planning level, which has been discussed in the case of Far East Square, other weaknesses can be found at other levels in China Square Central.

There were originally three historical streets within these two parcels. In the urban design guidelines, most emphasis was on Nankin Street as an important part of the pedestrian mall. The control of other two streets, Chin Chew Street and Hokien Street were somewhat ignored. In the completed project, these streets were mainly used as the entries of the shop-house offices and hard boundaries between conserved shop-houses and the office towers. (Figure 3-76) Compared to Far East Square, where there were mainly two streets and back-lanes as well as one square within the parcel, and all of them were used for some urban activities such as dining, shopping or performance, by contrast, in China Square Central, except for Nankin Street, the other two historical streets -Chin Chew Street and Hokien Street - were mainly used as service roads. Understanding that service roads are indispensable to support such a project, more considerations could be given to how to make better use of the heritages on these service roads.



Figure 3-76 : The empty Hokien Street

3.5.7.2 Partially realized design proposal

At architecture design level, only 25% of the initial intention of the architect has been realized, according to the architect's own words.¹⁶¹ The negotiations between different roles were not conducted effectively in this project. Most design attempts of the architect were aborted due to the urban design guidelines or economic feasibility.

In China Square Central, flexibility in the control system was not fully embodied in the architecture design process as that of Far East Square. The reason may lie on that most appeals of the architect touched the integrity of some key elements in urban design on which authority had to insist. Those elements mainly indicated the shop-houses and the pedestrian system inside China Square. The appeals of the architect of China Square Central tested the boundary of the control system which was built up in Bugis Junction. The rejection of the architect's appeals in China Square Central reminded people that flexibility was always regulated by the framework of the control system. It had become a difficult task for the authority to consider how to accommodate more flexibility into the control system and at the same time preclude too ambitious attempts which might ruin the system.

In China Square Central, it can be further discussed whether it was the best choice to insist on some detailed items. For instance, in this project, 50% of the party wall was required to be conserved. This parameter was one of the concentration during the negotiations. Finally, the parameter was maintained. In fact, after this project, URA changed this figure from 50% to 30%. Another example was the about the tunnel between the two open spaces. (Figure 3-75). Since the existence of those two open spaces

¹⁶¹ Please refer to the Appendix 3

at the two ends of the tunnel had been granted, it might be inappropriate for URA to allow building of only a narrow tunnel between them. A better choice would be to build a comparable, at least in size, linkage between those open spaces to enhance the continuity of them, because the value of a continued and effectively used open space would exceed that of two partially conserved shop-houses.

3.5.7.3 Illumination for the future

There are mainly three lessons that could be drawn from this case. First, more consideration could be given to issues other than the “focus” of urban design concept alone. In this project, two traditional streets are used as pure service roads. Though service road is an indispensable part of the project, it is possible to integrate the historical values with the function of services. Secondly, economic feasibility should never be forgotten as the premise of realization for any design proposal. In this project, residences in form of live-work units failed to be introduced due to economical reasons. Third, the regulating power of urban design system should not be underestimated. For an architect, to actively respond to this system in his own field might get better result than challenging it. The architect of this project tried several times to break some rules in the urban design system, but only small part of those attempts succeeded.

3.6 Conclusion

More than 50 years have passed by since Singapore’s urban renewal process began in the middle of the last century. Mainly three stages were experienced during this period. Decentralizing the population from the central area and providing housing for these people were the main objectives in the first stage. From the beginning of 1970s, the focus of urban renewal moved to providing spaces for commercial and business development.

The second stage was characterized by an intensive construction of office and commercial spaces.

The third stage began in the mid 1980s, when conservation obtained more attention. How to balance between modern development and conservation is a main concern at this stage. One possibility is to introduce new developments into old areas. Commercial developments as pioneers, quickly realized this possibility. Several attempts were made including the five cases examined in this chapter. The first case, Bugis Village, could be deemed as a beginning of this trend. People tried to keep the traditional atmosphere by conserving buildings as well as constructing buildings that imitated the old forms. The blending of old and new was completed in concept of similarity. When Bugis Junction was completed 3 years later, the concept changed. In the original design concept, the new structures were differentiated from the old ones by completely different faces. Instead of imitation, new design methods and technologies were applied on the new structures. Contrast was made deliberately to create a new harmony. Although the shop-houses were finally reconstructed, the concept of contrast remained. In Central Mall, the urban design concept was to insert new buildings into an historic area while at the same time conserving the old ones. This concept was embodied in the completed projects. However, the developments of the area severely compromised by the shortcomings of planning and urban design. From the viewpoint of purely conservation, Central Mall went further than Bugis Junction since at least the authentic historical shop-houses was preserved. In China Square, everything was controlled and arranged step by step. Both the commercial and social or cultural aspects were taken into account through the implementation process. Though the outcomes of the two projects investigated in this

chapter would not be exactly the same, they have improved much on many aspects compared to the Riverside Village.

While Singapore's urban renewal continues, more projects of this kind will appear. It is believed that by drawing the lessons and distilling useful experiences from previous practices, projects of blending old and new would contribute more to the built environment.

Chapter Four The roles of URA, Developers and Architects

One can find that the production process of a project is extremely complicated, especially for projects blending old and new, as we have examined in the previous chapters. The production processes of such projects tend to be more complex than projects consisting purely of conservation or new construction. The reason is that in most cases, in a pure conservation or new construction project, there is only one development direction that requires consideration, either old or new. However, for projects containing both conservation and new construction, there is more urban or architectural possibility. Besides old and new, different degrees of combination and proportions bring great development potential. A more complex situation is created when more choices are provided. Every group involved in the production process tries to control the degree of combination in order to maximize their own interests. Therefore, in projects blending old and new, conflicts of different interests is sometimes exaggerated to the point that the development policy is deeply impacted. As a result, the outcomes of such projects are more affected by these interests' conflicts. In order to fully understand the projects blending old and new, we need to pay some attention to these conflicts which happened during the production processes.

In most cases, these conflicts are carried out in forms of negotiation and collaboration by different roles representing different interests. Hence, the performances of these roles during the production processes are closely related to the final outcome. In this chapter,

we will move the emphasis from the production processes of selected projects to the performances of those key roles during those processes.

The performances of **three** key roles are selected to be analyzed in this chapter, according to the projects' production model of Singapore: the URA, the developers and the architects. The basic model of projects' production in Singapore was formed after the introduction of the Sale of Sites Programme. A full project production usually begins with compulsory land acquisition. After land acquisition, the government agent, URA in most cases, will complete the urban design and divide the land into parcels according to the latest planning policy and call for a tender to select suitable developers. Related planning and urban guidelines would be stated in the tenderer's package. The acceptance of the package is a prerequisite of a successful tender. After the tender, the developer would hire an architect to realize his development concept in physical form. Developers and architects would work closely during the architectural design process which the URA is also involved in when they review the proposals. After the design is completed, a contractor would finish the construction work as the last step.

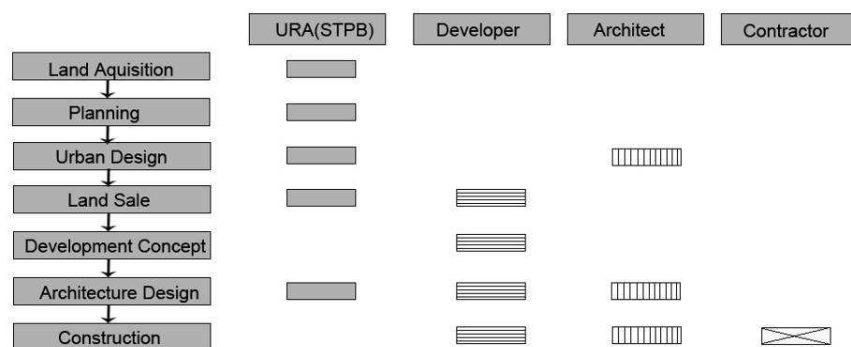


Figure 4-1 : The development steps and roles get involved

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In this project production model, URA, developers and architects, as three main roles take part in most stages. (Figure 4-1) They are selected as key roles in this dissertation. How these three roles, representing different interests, performed during the production processes of selected projects will be further discussed below.

4.1 Architects and their employers

4.1.1 Historical transformation of status

The social status of architects and their patrons or employers fluctuated throughout history. In ancient time, architects were deemed as masters of building and construction. Their patrons were always holders of great powers such as kings. The patrons would respect the architects as a specialist and even gave them high positions. In Medieval Ages, the term “architect” was replaced by “craftsman”. The patrons, often bishops or kings, had completely control over the buildings and designs. The contributions of the craftsmen were often shadowed by the power of the patrons or the aura of god. The Renaissance gave rise to the term “architect” again from 15th century. Architects were regarded as artists together with painters, sculptors and patronized by dignitaries.

The rise of capitalism commoditized everything, including lands, buildings and services. Architecture practice became a business. The relationship between architects and their patrons changed from “patronage” to “employment”. No longer held as artists, *architects were ranked with those who earn money with their special skills and knowledge such as*

*lawyers and doctors.*¹⁶² Another label applied to architects was the word ‘professional’. In 1931, the status of professional architects was officially recognized in England with the pass of 1931 Registration Act. When architects became professionals, patrons became their clients and the profile of clientele also changed. Except the traditional group of patrons, new middle class and collective clients or the public became the new clientele groups. The professionalizing of architect and the changed client’s sources demonstrated that a new model of architecture practice has formed which is the basic model for today’s architecture practice in most countries.

4.1.2 Role of modern architects and clients

4.1.2.1 Architects

In modern architecture practice, the role of architects might be more complicated than their predecessors. An architect has to play at least three distinct but overlapping roles:

The first is as a businessman. Since architecture design is labeled as a business, profits or losses must firstly be considered.

The term ‘professional’ is a description of a status. Professionals often hold a specific knowledge or qualifications which in turn grants them certain privileges. These privileges always come with social responsibilities. *They are supposed be on behalf of the public and conduct activities which should benefit most of people.*¹⁶³ For an architect, the

¹⁶² Frank Jenkins, *Architect and Patron ; a Survey of Professional Relations and Practice in England from the Sixteenth Century to the Present Day* (London , New York: Oxford University Press, 1961). p. 159.

¹⁶³ Paul Knox and Peter Ozolins, *Design Professionals and the Built Environment : An Introduction* (Chichester: John Wiley & Sons, 2000). p 32.

professional's social responsibility could be embodied by a strong will to improve the environment.

Artist is the third role an architect has to play. It is a most traditional aspect of an architect. The unique artistic identity makes architects distinct from any other professionals or businessmen.

These three overlapping roles constitute the identity of a modern architect. In fact, each of them represents different interests: individual interests as a businessman; clients' and public interests as a professional; public and personal interest as an artist. How to deal with the different interests became important work of a modern architect.

In Singapore context, the architect's role in the architecture practice fluctuated with the development of architecture practice. Singapore's architecture community started from the early 1960s. The first school of architecture was established in 1958 at the Singapore Polytechnic. The period from the beginning of 1960s to the mid-1970s can be regarded as the *liberating and flourishing period*¹⁶⁴ for Singapore's architects. The nation's independence in 1965 provided the architectural profession a great opportunity to build nearly a new city. Since everything was at the starting point, both the nation and the architectural profession had to rely on their own. The architects, with no reference and constraint, had the confidence to conduct some pioneer projects such as the Pearl Bank Apartments, the Marco Polo Hotel and the National Theatre. There was an atmosphere of "can do" in the architectural profession. *It was an un-self conscious fearless architecture*

¹⁶⁴ Ken Yeang, "Singapore's Architects and Architecture in the World's Market Place," in *Contemporary Singapore Architecture : 1960's to 1990's* ed. Philip Joo Hwa Bay, et al. (Singapore: Singapore Institute of Architects, 1998). P. 270

*that all the possibilities of becoming endemic architecture of Singapore*¹⁶⁵ Such atmosphere made the architects of this period perform assertively with resolution. They were regarded as the designers and creators of the whole city.

During the period from the mid-1970s to the mid-1980s, the architectural community evolved from the starting stage to a mature stage. In the 1970s, the booming economy brought a high demand of construction volume. The building types being asked for were diversified from mostly residential use to commercial, office and other uses. Various new constructions provided an ideal practice field for Singapore architects. From this period, the government allowed foreign architects to enter the market. The policy impacted Singapore architects in two ways. Firstly, the policy pushed the Singapore architects onto the world stage, and made them perform and compete with foreign counterparts. This measure accelerated the maturization of Singapore architectural profession. Secondly, when some big names were introduced, they mainly took charge of the conceptual design processes. Local architects, somehow, had to carry out other work such as project management, design management and site supervision. On the one hand, local architects lost the opportunity of designing some mega projects; on the other hand, they gained more practical experience in different aspects of architecture design, which would have positive influence on their professional careers.

While their technical skills went towards maturity, the architect's role in the practice was criticized of being submissive and supportive, as Tan Cheng Siong put it: *very often we*

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. P.271

*forget ourselves and behave too submissively in performing our services.*¹⁶⁶ The reason may be that the booming demands made most architects rush to their following projects. Since no time was left for more thinking, complying appeared to be the fastest resolution. Such a situation had been noticed by Tan Cheng Siong and he had reminded the architects that *we should be more assertive in dealing with certain issues of principle.*¹⁶⁷

After 1985, the Singapore's architectural community experienced a period of steady development. The local architects had the opportunity to design huge local developments, though some of these projects, including the UOB Plaza, The Suntec City and the National Arts Centre, were joined-efforts with foreign firms. The local architects also attended some planning processes of Singapore such as preparing the Development Guide Plans.¹⁶⁸ The architect's stance in the architectural practice moved towards a more comprehensive one. Their roles were not restricted to be designers purely. They also had to act as managers and businessmen, as Tan Cheng Siong had asserted: *the architects should accept the role of the prime mover in project design, management and implementation with conviction.*¹⁶⁹

4.1.2.2 Clients

Accompanied by the professionalization of architects, traditional patrons became professionals' clients. The clients' focus also moved from supporting the arts to practical

¹⁶⁶ Cheng Siong Tan, "The Roles & Services of the Architect in the 80s" (paper presented at the The Role of the Singapore Architect in the 80s and Beyond, Singapore, 1983).

¹⁶⁷ Ibid.

¹⁶⁸ Yeang, "Singapore's Architects and Architecture in the World's Market Place."

¹⁶⁹ Tan, "The Roles & Services of the Architect in the 80s".

architectural work. *Like the clients of other professionals, they desire specific services that they pay for.*¹⁷⁰

Except traditional land owners, developers became an important source of clientele. As a result of commercialization, buildings came commoditized. A new group of people known as the developer appeared. They do not construct building for self-usage but for selling or renting as a form of investments. Building's users and owners are separated. These have great impact on the built environment. As businessmen, pursuing more profit is the prime goal of most developers which decides their basic standpoint in the production process of projects.

In reality, the developers are more often shrewd businessmen rather than naive laymen who fixated on instant profits only. Instead of maximizing floor area purely, design itself is also deemed as a form of investment by many real estate developers. Besides design, the quality of urban environment also receives more attention from modern developers because it is found that the property's prices are not solely affected by what the developers do within their own holdings but also fluctuate with the changing relationships among properties.¹⁷¹

In Singapore, the government used to be the biggest developer during the 1960s' urban renewal programme. HDB, as the government agent, built mostly housing and related facilities for accommodating the population decentralized from the central area. Since the middle of the 1970s, when the Sale of Site programme was started as a tool to stimulate

¹⁷⁰ Dana Cuff, *Architecture : The Story of Practice* (Cambridge, Mass.: : MIT Press, 1991). p 171

¹⁷¹ John R. Logan and Harvey Lusk Molotch, *Urban Fortunes : The Political Economy of Place* (Berkeley, CA: : University of California Press, 1987). p 24

the redevelopment of the city, especially the central area, private developers were introduced as another important source of Singapore architects' clientele. Today, although the government still carries out some developments on its own, most of these developments are related to public use. Private sector has become a prime force in the property market. These private developers conduct most commercial, office, and private housing projects in Singapore and they consist of the major part of the client source for Singapore's architecture practice.

4.1.3 Case based analysis

Based on the discussion above, the performances of architects and developers in the selected cases would be discussed in detail below.

4.1.3.1 Architects

For an architect, conciliating the conflict of different interests is an important part of his work. To complete such work, strategies are often necessary such as Cuff noted: *The classic schism between art and business embodied in architecture and promoted by our institutions must be bridged using a variety of strategies.*¹⁷² In realities, strategies could vary greatly according to different situations.

In Bugis Village, there were two architects and both of them were as civil servants. It was an unusual situation in which the architects could design only according to the requirement of government. Neither developers' requirements nor formal proposal review

¹⁷² Cuff, *Architecture : The Story of Practice*. p 255

process are needed. Therefore, the design process was largely simplified and straightforward.

In Bugis Junction, the architect was a typical professional architect. Bugis Junction was a great opportunity for an architect because of its unique location, scale and interesting existing buildings. The architect made an innovative proposal which combined the old structures with the new ones through a fashionable concept. He also invited consultants from England to solve technical problems. However, the proposed underground car park might increase the cost of the whole project significantly. There were three choices for the architect, persuading the clients to increase the budget, lowering the cost of the superstructures to fit the budget or appealing URA for adjusting the guidelines. Finally, the architect left the problem to URA.

Throughout the entire process, we could find that the architect had the opportunity to act more positively in earlier stages. In the beginning, the architect did a lot of work to propose a novel design. But when problems happened in the design review process, he eventually left them to the client and URA rather than resolving the conflicts by his own design. However, the architect's contribution should still be fully recognized. Through a design proposal with high quality, the architect successfully convinced the client to believe that the blending of old and new was the best choice for this project. Even after the budget was set free from restrictions of guidelines, the client did not give up the original design proposal. In completed project, it was mostly realized. The design methodology used in this proposal was widely adopted in projects after Bugis Junction. The blending concept introduced in this project also played an important role in the urban renewal of Singapore.

In Central Mall, the concept of blending was given by the URA. What the architect did was to develop this concept. Conservation was done exactly according to the guidelines. The connection of the new car park building to the office building is the biggest innovation the architect made. The architect did not try to breach any rules nor make any extraordinary proposals. His main objective was to fulfill the requirements from all related parties. The architect's performance might be satisfied by URA and developer. However, as an architect, something more is needed. When all the requirements were fulfilled, one thing was missing: the will of an architect. It is necessary for a professional architect to have a strong will to improve the environment and add some personal preference into it. Those wills could promote creativity and sometimes might bring some surprise to our environment. In the three identities of an architect; the businessman, the professional and the artist, the first one was over-stressed in this project. However, architecture design is not a pure profit seeking business. To some extent, a little idealism is always needed by an architect,

Compared with Central Mall, the architect acted more positively in China Square Central. In this project, the architect tried to introduce something new from aspects of public spaces and land-use. A series of public spaces were proposed in the original proposal which had to break some urban design guidelines. Since this project was part of a complete planning and urban design system, it was difficult to make big changes at the urban design level. Therefore, the architect had to modify his design reluctantly and finally only less than half of those public spaces were realized. About land-use, the architect intended to introduce some residences into this area in the form of Soho units. But the high construction fees led to the abortion of this idea.

The architect of this project had a strong will to do something new and good for the public which fully reflected the professional aspects of an architect. However, a strong will only could not guarantee the successful realization of a proposal. In this project, less than half of the architect's original design concept was realized. The imperfect performance of the architect was an important reason for this. First, the architect underestimated power of a complete urban design system and based his design on the breaking of some key rules in this system. After his appeal was rejected by URA, he just reluctantly revised the design to fix the guidelines rather than explore other more positive ways to realize his concept. As a result, only a small part of the public spaces he had proposed was built in form of a square. To some extent, the square was more like a piece of an unrealized proposal rather than an organic part of its current environment. When architect tried to introduce Soho units into the project, he spent much effort on taking care of the guidelines. During the revising process, the construction fee rose to a point that economic feasibility of the whole project was affected. The abortion of this proposal reminded us that the clients' interests should be guaranteed before any proposal could be realized.

In this project, the outcome was far from the architect's original perspective. Although the environment still benefited because of his efforts. The architect showed that he fully respected the heritages by retaining the most of the originality of the shop-houses. This project, as an indispensable part of the China Square area, realized most of the urban design concepts for this area. In addition, one more big public open space was contributed to the city, whose scale was unique compared to adjacent areas.

Far East Square, which also is situated in China Square, was much more fortunate than China Square Central. Far East Square was located on a land parcel which contained more old shop-houses than any other parcels of this area. For such a parcel, there was not enough space to completely separate the old and new, such as China Square Central. Therefore, more work had to be done with the old shop-houses themselves. Apart from adaptive re-use work, the architect also tried hard to lift the potential value of the conserved shop-houses through specific design strategies, such as separating office and retail space, adding separate entries and foyers for the offices and linking them with corridors. In addition, the architect also suggested removing a proposed commercial block because it would block the potential pedestrian flow. All these strategies were greatly welcomed by the client and helped the architect build a good relationship with the client. This was crucial for future negotiations. The architect also proposed a big roof over the streets and a square in the centre of the site. This proposal greatly increased the Gross Floor Area (GFA) which was strictly constrained in guidelines. During the negotiation with URA, the client provided important support for the architect. They not only accepted extra conditions imposed by URA but also contributed the Fuk Tak Chi Temple to the public as a free museum. All these actions guaranteed the realization of this proposal. The support of the clients could be deemed as the rewards of the architect for the great efforts he had made to maximize the potential of whole project.

In this project, the architect realized most of his design concepts by a series of strategies. The rhythm was well controlled. Firstly, much effort was made to build a firm relationship with the client. This relationship played an important role in successive negotiations with URA. The design proposal also gave some considerations to the issues

that URA was concerned with such as public spaces. Though different from the URA's original perspective, it provided another solution for the public interests which was a precondition of successful negotiation. Conflicts would be replaced by collaborations in a situation in which all the interests could be accommodated, which was what the architect had tried to achieve in this case.

4.1.3.2 Lessons for architects

As a modern architect, the triple identities, as an artist, a professional and a businessman, often set him into a deep dilemma. He can not be a pure artist since no other art is as complex as a building; he can not be a pure businessman, fixated on profits only. To be a professional, he even can not represent the public without personal bias. Seeking balance among the different interests became a tough task for him.

When the identity of an architect was more complicated, the development of technique greatly alleviated the work of the architect in other related fields such as civil engineering, material, and construction. These changes provided possibilities to move architect's focus to the fields that most valuable contribution can be made. The communication between people was an important one. Jenkins noted that: *If the work of technologist is a direct answer to a purely physical problem, the architects have to make some contact with man and the subtleties of his personality which should provide, within its physical limitations, an ideal environment for particular human activities.*¹⁷³ The forming of such an "ideal environment for particular human activities" did rely on the people involved in the activities and the relationships between them.

¹⁷³ Jenkins, *Architect and Patron ; a Survey of Professional Relations and Practice in England from the Sixteenth Century to the Present Day*. p.235

For an architect, the client is the first people he needs to face in a project. It is normal for an architect that the client comes to the architect with more or less formed concepts or opinions about the project. It is different from other professionals such as the doctors or lawyers, who always have full confidence of the clients because of their specific knowledge. For an architect, he has to pay more effort to gain this confidence. To get full confidence of the client, an architect has to do something to let the client know he is working on behalf of his interests. As a strategy, *architects will join forces with their clients, assuring them the design process will be a mutual effort. As such alliance are formed, there may be the discovery, and sometimes cultivation, of an “outsider”—a common adversary upon whom insiders can vent frustrations.*¹⁷⁴ In the last case, the architect did a lot to maximize potential value of the project in order to build confidence from the client. Reputation and personalities of an architect could also help him to build such confidence; however, the quality of design itself is most important. Even very influential architect such as the architect of Bugis Junction, also needed to persuade the clients with good design quality and great commercial potential of the proposal. Holding the full confidence of the client, it is easy for an architect to build a close working relationship or even form some alliances with them which played an important part in the future process. To an architect, the client might not mean an employer only but also a powerful collaborator and potential leaguer. Except the employer, the other two need to be cultivated. But once all these roles of the client are well explored, they would greatly help the architect to realize his ideals. Hence, how to conduct this cultivation deserves more consideration of all architects.

¹⁷⁴ Cuff, *Architecture : The Story of Practice*. 180

4.1.3.3 Developers

Logan and Molotch summarized a social typology of contemporary place entrepreneurs or developers in the book: *Urban Fortunes: The Political Economy of Place*¹⁷⁵. Three types of place entrepreneurs are identified. The first kind is named “serendipitous entrepreneurs”. They only take a small proportion and “*become rent collectors by inheriting property or by some other fortuitous circumstance*”. They are often lucky individuals or families and essentially passive. The second type is “active entrepreneurs”. These entrepreneurs are always *seeking rent by gaining control over locations likely to become more strategic over time*. In order to speculate actively, they have to predict development trends and gamble on predictions. Most of them are small to medium scale investors. The last type is “structural speculators”. Instead of estimating, they tend to *create differential rents by influencing the larger area of decision making that will determine location advantages*.

The typology above is introduced as a tool to analysis the developer’s performance in the cases studied. Since all the developers of these cases tendered lands from URA which meant that they conducted the developments intentionally, they should belong to the latter two types of the typology: active entrepreneurs and structural speculators. However, their degrees of intentionality and capability may differ. Intentionality here mainly indicates what the developers want to do in a project while capability here is related to what they can do in a project.

¹⁷⁵ Logan and Molotch, *Urban Fortunes : The Political Economy of Place*.

In Bugis Village, most stages of this project were strictly controlled by the government. Essen Technology Pte Ltd was only introduced into the stages of construction and management. In this project, the role of the private sector was more like a “contractor” rather than a private developer in common sense. Therefore, the impact which they added on the project was limited.

The developer of Bugis Junction, Bugis City Holdings (BCH), consisted of three influential international investors. They expressed their aggressive development intention by tendering all the three land parcels. Their target was clear from the beginning: a big multifunctional commercial development for local people. They recognized the potential value of the architect’s design proposal. However, they refused to increase the budget. Therefore, they chose to influence the outside constraint and obtain extra permission as a typical **structural speculator**. Instead of waiting and predicting the trend, they tended to alter the outside conditions with their own power. To some extent, they dominated the whole production process of this project from the land purchase to the reconstruction of shop-houses. In the completed project, their goal of commercial profit seeking was mostly achieved.

The developer of Central Mall was a typical **active entrepreneur**. As any other projects in the Riverside Village area, the development of Central Mall was limited in a middle scale one by the specific land sale policy. In this situation, all developers in this area conducted their own developments cautiously within their own parcels, taking no notice of what happened outside their parcels. Though present situation of the Riverside Village area was largely caused by planning disadvantages as well as economic crash, the developers’ passive responses to the surroundings was also an important reason.

With the similar development scale of Central Mall, the developer of Far East Square, was more sensitive to the urban environment within and surrounding their own project. Instead of trying to get some extra privilege from the outside, which was what the developer of Bugis Junction did, the developer of Far East Square was inclined to create an ideal situation and made deals with the authorities. In order to maximize the property's value in multiple aspects, they closely collaborated with the architect. They not only accepted the architect's proposal but also provide additional support at the cost of some instant commercial profits. As **sophisticated active entrepreneurs**, they did accurate prediction on development trend and further more, acted positively to welcome such trend. .

In China Square Central, when the developer bought the two biggest land parcels in China Square, their development intentionality was to make a complex with food, retail, and entertainment together in a huge one stop center, which sounded like Bugis Junction. But what differentiated it from Bugis Junction was that these two land parcels were already included in a complete and sophisticated urban design system. In such a system, these two parcels had their own fixed position: important part of whole China Square area. Any rules breaching were already precluded by this system. After several attempts failed, the developer had to choose the ordinary route. They had the tendency to be **structural speculator** in this case. They wanted to bring bigger influence to the outside environment but underestimated the power of a complete planning and urban design system.

4.1.3.4 Lessons for developers

After the performances of these developers are reviewed, we could find that a proper degree of intentionality and capability of developers might exist in this kind of projects.

Among the three main developer types: serendipitous entrepreneurs; active entrepreneurs and structural speculators, the level of the developers' intentionality goes higher and higher together with the increasing of their influence upon the built environment. While serendipitous entrepreneurs might closely tie to a specific local parcel and ignore the role of government authority, structural speculators would make use of government and have a much wider field of operation¹⁷⁶ which might have big impact on the built environment. However, for projects blending old and new, a developer with too high a level of intentionality and great capability may not necessarily lead to the best result. The developer of Bugis Junction was a developer of this kind. They dominated the whole project and the project obtained great commercial success. But there was still some regret in the sense of urban environment which might be due to the fact that the developer's power went beyond proper limits. However, it is also found that only pure traditional active entrepreneurs could not satisfy the demands from the various aspects in these projects. The developers in Riverside Village were typical active entrepreneurs. They just concentrated on their own properties and were unwilling to do anything more if it appeared irrelevant even though those irrelevant things might improve their situations. However, as modern developers, a more positive attitude towards the built environment could benefit not only the developers themselves but also the public. Hence, if there is an ideal developer's type for projects blending old and new, it should be one between structural speculators and active entrepreneurs.

This specific kind of developers has a more positive attitude towards the surroundings than the typical active entrepreneurs and has a lower intentionality level than structural

¹⁷⁶ Ibid. p 31.

speculators. They understand precisely the social nature of properties and response actively within their own fields. We could call them the sophisticated active entrepreneurs. The developer of Far East Square would be closest to this kind of developers among all the developers of the projects studied. Throughout the production process of their project, they were sensitive to the value of their properties and surroundings, they were willing to do something more for it. Such sensibility is a indispensable character for a modern developer.

By examining the developer's performances in selected projects, we could also find that some concepts have gradually formed in developers' mind. One of them is that some instant commercial profit has to give way to longer term benefit in some situations. Another one is that the built environment and the relationships between buildings could be exploited as effective profit promoters and deserves appropriate investments. Some developers of the selected projects have already applied such concepts. It is certain that such concepts would have a positive impact on the built environment. However, since they may not be the most profitable choice, the prevalence of those concepts still requires more efforts from many aspects: the government's encouragement, the architect's cultivation and the public's support.

4.2 Government Agent

4.2.1 General background

Except for the first one, all the four projects have a common government agent: the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA). It is also the main government agent we would discuss in the study.

In Singapore, government agents, or statutory boards are *public institutions established by law to discharge certain specific functions, duties and responsibilities*.¹⁷⁷ As representatives of the government, they are financed by the government and have the responsibility to respond to the policy of the government. Normally they are subordinate to the related government ministries and departments. URA, for example, is subordinate to the Ministry of National Development. Other government agents under the same ministry include the Housing & Development Board, Building and Construction Authority and National Parks Board.

Current URA as an independent, autonomous body has experienced a process of evolution. In 1966, the Urban Redevelopment Department (URD) was established in HDB to carry out the tasks related to urban renewal in the central area. When large land was cleared and reclaimed, the demand to redevelop the central area gave rise to the idea of establishing an autonomous body to take charge of redevelopment. In 1974, The URD was upgraded into the Urban Redevelopment Authority by the passing of the Urban Redevelopment Authority Act. The Act also stipulated to merge the Car Parks Division of the Ministry of National Development into URA. Current scale of URA is the result of another amalgamation. In 1989, the Planning Department and the Research and Statistics Unit of the Ministry were absorbed into URA. The amalgamation in 1989 made URA become largely responsible for the planning and implementation of urban renewal programmes for the city area.

¹⁷⁷ Howe Yoon Chong, *The Public Sector in Social and Economic Development*, ed. Petir, *Pap 25th Anniversary Issue* (Singapore: Singapore: PAP Central Executive Committee, 1979). Cited by Wai Leong Wong, *Urban Redevelopment Authority : Its Role and Contribution to Singapore's National Development* (1980).

The overall objective of URA was *to create a new and gracious city with better environment for business, residence as well as social activities*.¹⁷⁸ Under such objective, there are three main functions of URA: the first is to conduct comprehensive slum clearance and redevelop those dilapidated areas; the second one is to prepare land for redevelopment by acquiring land from private owners, assembling fragmented lands and re-parcelling them; the third function is to promote the Central Area by preparing plans and urban design, conducting urban and property market studies, organizing and controlling land sale and supervising the implementation of projects.¹⁷⁹

Closely related to the ultimate shape of the city, there are two main concerns of URA when it carries out its third function. The first concern is the construction of an open space system in Singapore. Such intention had been expressed in the first annual report of URA as *more open space and landscape pedestrian mall would be created to reinforce Singapore's garden city image*.¹⁸⁰ The second concern is about the heritage of built environment. Such concern was also noted in the same annual report as *in renewing the city, our planners and architects have not overlooked the need of historical or architectural heritage. Sites and buildings will be earmarked and preserved*.¹⁸¹

From 1974 when URA was founded, the scope of URA's work did not change much. Its work included land amalgamation (alienation of state land, acquisition of private land, and reclamation), clearance, resettlement, construction of resettlement facilities and development through URA's own implementation or through the sale of sites for private

¹⁷⁸ Singapore. Parliament., *Parliamentary Debates : Official Report*, vol. Vol. 32 (Singapore: Govt. Printer, 1973).

¹⁷⁹ Wong, *Urban Redevelopment Authority : Its Role and Contribution to Singapore's National Development*.

¹⁸⁰ Urban Redevelopment Authority (Singapore), *Annual Report*, vol. 1974/75- ([Singapore]: Urban Redevelopment Authority.).

¹⁸¹ Ibid.

sector implementation.¹⁸² However, the emphasis of work fluctuated with the change of situation. While before 1974, the main work of URD concentrated on urban renewal programme, to prepare land for more developments became the focus of URA's work from the middle of 1970s to the middle of 1980s. After 1989, conservation issues were also emphasized.

During the last 25 years, URA brought great change to Singapore's Central Area. If HDB was the major government agency for the transformation of Singapore before 1980s, this role has been taken over by URA in the last 25 years. Especially URA's efforts to conserve the historical districts gave the authority a high profile in conservation.¹⁸³

All the objectives, functions and concerns of URA can be best demonstrated through their actual performance which will be discussed below.

4.2.2 Case based analysis

The development of Bugis Village was mainly dominated by the government, from development concept to architecture design. What URA had done in this project was the restoration of some shop-houses at their own expense since conservation was not deemed as a profitable business at that time. To have conservation as well as new construction on the same site was not in the URA's initial planning vision. Instead, the completion of Bugis Village inspired URA, to some extent, about the idea of combining new construction with conservation in one project.

¹⁸² Dale, *Urban Planning in Singapore : The Transformation of a City*. p. 96

¹⁸³ Ibid.

Bugis Junction was the first trial for URA to promote blending projects through an area-based development policy. Complete planning and urban design were made and detailed guidelines were issued. The whole area was divided into three parcels with separated planning and urban design guidelines. However at the land sale stage, not much control was added which led to the amalgamation of three sites. When three sites merged into one, an area-based development policy was down-graded into the decision of a single site. In the meantime, the only one developer for a merged site might have more opportunities to have large influence to the entire area than three developers of separated land parcels. In the Technical Conditions of Bugis Junction, conservation was stressed. Some specific guidelines were given for the new buildings in order to harmonize the old and the new. The economic feasibility of the guidelines was challenged in reality. Finally, all these imperfections partially led to the abortion of all the control measures.

In Central Mall, the project's fate was largely decided by the planning and urban design of the whole Riverside Village area. As part of the Singapore River Planning area, Riverside Village was planned in Singapore River Development Guide Plan 1994. However in this planning, the specific situation of Riverside Village area was mostly ignored especially the negative impact of Merchant Road's traffic.

During land sale, the whole area was divided into small parcels in order to maintain a village-like atmosphere. However, the small land parcels created major problems during the tendering process. In urban design guidelines, while conservation and public spaces between different parcels were stressed, other aspects were more or less neglected. One such aspect was the land use control. Land use was, to some extent, largely determined by the developers which led to an unreasonable land-use distribution in this area. Another

neglected issue was infrastructures around this area. Proper infrastructures could effectively increase the accessibility of this whole area and mitigate the planning disadvantages. However, these disadvantages were further exaggerated by the negligence of urban design.

Though many lessons could be drawn from this project, a blending atmosphere was eventually shaped by the combination of conserved shop-houses and modern buildings. . Due to the effective urban design control within the area as well as the cooperation of developers and architects, a small pedestrian system was also formed by pedestrian streets and squares

For China Square, in development policy, the whole area was defined as a linkage between Chinatown and CBD with mixed new developments and selective conservations. Through the preparation of planning, urban design and land sale policy, a complete control system was built up to guarantee the realization of development policies.

The feasibility of such a control system could be best verified in reality. During the land sale process, all the seven parcels were sold quickly at expected prices. During the architecture design review process, some compromise was made when there were conflicts between the guidelines and the design proposals. For URA, the most difficult work was to decide in what situation the guidelines could be changed. Two projects studied in this dissertation are located in China Square area. Although within the similar control system, their design review processes differed much.

In Far East Square, most appeals of the architect were approved by URA, which included having a modern facade for the new car-park building, removing a proposed commercial

block and adding a roof over shop-houses. Related guidelines were adjusted according to those appeals. However in China Square Central, URA seemed to be not so receptive. In order to accommodate Soho units, the architect appealed to demolish more party walls between conserved shop-houses. This appeal was rejected. The second appeal was about the big square. Only half the size of the proposed square was finally realized.

Although all the architects' appeals have their own social advantages, which might be a prerequisite of additional appeals, they obtained different results. It is found that in the similar control system, whether an appeal could be approved or not is determined by some key factors. The first one is conservation. A major difference between the architect's appeals of Far East Square and China Square Central is the attitude towards existing shop-houses. The proposals of Far East Square seemed audacious which tried to break the guidelines several times. However none of those appeals was related to any destruction of shop-houses. If something had to be done with the shop-houses, the architect would add some elements such as a roof or a corridor rather than removing parts of shop-houses. In China Square Central, most appeals were related to removing the whole or part of the shop-houses. It was evident that conservation actually had some kind of priority during URA's decision making process. It was an indispensable part of whole China Square development policy, which URA had to insist during implementation. It seemed that URA was willing to see more creative work as well as more benefits of the public while upholding the integrity of the development policy.

The second issue which may affect the result of architect's appeal is related to urban design. An important urban design concept for China Square was the pedestrian mall between these parcels. Whether this urban design concept could be realized was of much

concern to URA. In Far East Square, although some appeals about public spaces were proposed, the public space planned in the urban design was kept intact. However, the architect's appeal of China Square Central tried to combine two parcels and change the spatial character between them. The space between these two parcels was supposed to be part of the pedestrian mall which was a key element in urban design. Though more public spaces were always welcomed by URA, what they preferred was to get extra public spaces within the land parcels while leaving the spaces between parcels for urban design.

The entire development of the China Square area was pushed forward by URA step by step. Each step was under certain control with principles. During the proposal review process, certain degree of flexibility was also provided. Although some imperfections exist, such flexible control demonstrated that URA has the capability to conduct projects blending of old and new in the context of Singapore.

4.2.2.1 Lessons for Government Agencies

For URA, it is a general evolution process from Bugis Village to China Square. In Bugis Village, URA concentrated on purely conservation work. Maybe inspired by Bugis Village, URA intended to promote the idea of blending as an implement of conservation. Bugis Junction was its first trial. In Bugis Junction, URA built up a basic control model for projects of this kind. However, problems happened because of the imperfections of such a model. In Riverside Village, they revised the basic control model but the whole area was ruined by carelessness at the planning level. However in this case the intention of blending was finally realized for the first time. Based on previous experiences, URA revised the control model again in China Square and made it most complete and systematic among all the cases studied. From the initial planning concept to the

architecture design, all things were under a certain degree of control. The feasibility of such a complete control system was best tested in reality, especially during the design review process. There is a misunderstanding that design control is only about aesthetic issues but actually it related to much wider fields such as height, mass, density and access. To this extent, design control can be seen as an active component of urban design.¹⁸⁴ This tendency was also reflected in the control measures of China Square.

Besides the control model, URA's understanding of conservation also changed through time. In Bugis Junction, the guidelines about conservation were quite strict. Most of them were similar to the restoration work of Chinatown. For example, for the whole development, including old and new, pitched roof with unglazed clay tiles was required. In China Square, URA held a more open and flexible view towards these issues. Although conservation was still the focus of entire development policy, certain adaptive re-use work and structural work of shop-houses were allowed. The definition of harmony between old and new was greatly enriched.

For all the three roles discussed in this chapter, the completion of those projects is a generally evolutionary process. For URA, a complete control mechanism has been gradually formed and the idea of blending is also applied as an important part of development strategy. For developers, most of them have recognized that it is not enough to aim at instant benefits only if they want to best exploit the value of their properties. For architects, the basic design methodology for blending projects was successfully introduced from abroad and adapted to local projects. Architects are also willing to use

¹⁸⁴ Madanipour, *Design of Urban Space : An Inquiry into a Socio-Spatial Process*, p. 163

more strategies during the architecture design process in order to better communicate with other roles. Everyone is adjusting according to the changing situations and at the same time affecting others. However, all the people involved in the production process of these projects share the same will: to improve our built environment.

Chapter Five Conclusion

In this dissertation, projects blending old and new are investigated as a practice of Singapore's urban renewal. First, urban renewal of western countries is generally reviewed. Two different understandings of urban renewal as processes and programme are discerned. Within the two understandings, urban renewal is mainly regarded as programmes in this dissertation. Based on the programme approach, the taxonomy of Jon Lang is introduced in order to further define the scope of the urban renewal programmes. Three categories are given by Jon Lang as city rebuilding, slum clearance and built site redevelopment. All projects studied in this dissertation belong to the third one: built site redevelopment.

This dissertation is closely related to the context of Singapore. Hence, a general review of Singapore's urban renewal is also provided. The urban renewal of Singapore is divided into three phases. The first phase is characterized by the slum clearance and population decentralization. The second phase is consisted mainly of intensive construction. Conservation takes up an important position in the third phrase. The review of the third phase is more detailed than the other two because all the projects studied in this dissertation are mainly built in the third phase. The third phase began from the middle of 1980s, when social and cultural values of urban heritages were widely recognized in Singapore. In 1989, URA designated ten conservation areas. Strict guidelines were issued to protect the historical buildings and districts. However, protection is not enough, as most of these heritages were already economically obsolete. The conflict of the old fabric

and new developments is a serious dilemma faced by the old areas. Hence, projects with blending old and new rise as a solution,.

After a general review about Singapore's urban renewal, the dissertation further concentrates on the "blending" projects. Several such projects have taken place in Singapore in the last 15 years. Five projects are presented here. Each of these projects is not only an independent development but also a record of Singapore's urban renewal. Bugis Village can be regarded as the beginning of these projects. There were two components in this project: the conservation of shop-houses and the re-creation of Bugis Street, which was the new construction. These two parts were developed by two different ideas that belonged to different authorities, but these two components blended together at the implementation stage. Blending was completed by similar appearance and functions in this project. Bugis Village reminded people that the old areas could be redeveloped in a way other than pure replacement or conservation. Three years later when the area of Bugis Junction was going to be redeveloped, the concept of blending was proposed as an urban development strategy. The government was willing to see some blending happen and actively encouraged it. At implementation stage, more sophisticated technologies and design methodology were applied. However, the concept of blending was not strictly realized in Bugis Junction. Although its urban design concept and architecture design methodology did affect people's view about blending. In Central Mall, blending was decided to be the strategy for the whole Riverside Village area. It was different from Bugis Junction in which the blending was more like a decision for a single site. Large scale demolishing could be excluded by this area development strategy. For the whole Riverside Village area, real blending of old and new, as the development strategy of the

government, was fully realized. However, the result of the projects in Riverside Village demonstrated that more planning and urban design experience was required. The situation was different in China Square, from planning to construction, each stage made its own contribution to the whole concept in China Square. Though the results of different developments would fluctuate, within the same frame, the realization of whole development strategy could be best embodied in the completed China Square.

After the production processes of the selected cases are traced, the characters and performances of some main roles are further discussed. The authority, the developers and the architects are selected as representatives of these main roles. All the main roles experienced a learning process when they took part in the production processes of the cases studied. No one knew how to conduct this kind of projects at first. But after several experiments, regardless of their success, lessons could be drawn. To the authority, only a general concept was provided in the early projects, but they soon recognized that they had to add more control over the implementation process. The projects of China Square demonstrated that the whole authority's control system had already taken shape. To the developers, it was a great progress to recognize the social and cultural value of the heritages, and furthermore, to make use of these values rather than taking conservation as simply a waste of money. The architects also became more skillful at handling projects of this kind and were willing to apply more strategies to balance different interests.

After the production processes of the selected cases were reviewed and the roles involved were analyzed, we found that for projects blending old and new, there is a general evolution direction though their development is not a strictly progress process. It is not possible for every new project to be better than the previous ones, but it is easier for the

new ones to do better with more references. Based on the experience and lessons from precedent projects, new projects are built, and they again provide more lessons for future ones. Through this rough evolution, experience is accumulated and lessons are learned.

Besides a general evolution direction, we also find that an integrated control system for the blending projects has taken shape gradually. Such an integrated control system indicates not only the government's control measures but also controls from other fields such as social, economic, and cultural. This control system was totally absent when the first blending projects were built. It is formed incrementally in practice and begins to show its effect gradually. It is like a product of the developing process of blending projects and this product would add more impact on the developing process itself as it matures. This whole control system maintains the realization of blending. No single person or group has full control over it however it would be affected by all related aspects. Everyone involved in the system could be benefited as well as constrained. The main objective of this system is not as an incubator for 'star' projects but to maintain all the projects at a certain level and prevent obvious mistakes during the urban transformation process. For urban environment, stability is more important than creativity, which may be crucial for single project. That is why there are more 'star' architects than "star" planners or urban designers. Another function of this whole control system is to make this kind of projects replicable like products. Within this system, the production process of projects could be repeated and further adapted to other new situations, while the quality of projects could be maintained. This feature is more practicable in urban expansion areas. When cities become bigger, more city areas need to be redeveloped. This system could provide an effective and instant solution for these areas.

There are several important features of this integrated control system. The three characters listed below are among them.

Continuity. Singapore has a stable political environment. In this stable political environment, the government of Singapore is willing and influential enough to implement tough but pragmatic policies which are considered to be in national interest. The political stability and effective government facilitate continuity in implementation and encourage a willingness to plan and invest on projects that consider more about long-term benefits. The political stability is continued and further developed into development strategies by URA, as a government agent. This is one reason why the intention of applying blending could be sustained for 15 years or even longer since it was first proposed. The political stability also give private investors more confidence to invest on long term interests. In this situation, there are more opportunities for professionals to strive for public benefits. It is the continuity that guarantees time and space to generate a complete development circle and incubates stimulations from inside to push the integrated control system forward.

Multiple level controls. From the earliest stage to construction, every stage has to be under certain control, either through compulsory regulations or indirect pressure from economic or social aspects. The Land Acquisition Act added legit control over the land acquisition. The stages from planning to land sale are strictly controlled and operated by government agent, the URA. The selection of developer is constrained by the land sale policy as well as prevailing economic situation. The control system is diversified when private sectors are introduced after land sale. Although URA still maintains some control in the architecture design stage, the developers and architects would add their own

controls over the project by bringing their own sets of value. The control of each stage, from land acquisition to construction, is indispensable for the entire process. Any weakness or missing link would lead to unpredictable results such as in the case of Central Mall. Only with a complete and organic control system would the whole project be conducted rationally and effectively.

Flexibility. A rigid system could lose its vitality and realism. Therefore, flexibility is another indispensable element in this whole control system. The significance of flexibility would be reflected easily when more interests are involved into the projects. It is not the government's duty only to maintain flexibility, but efforts from all related roles are required. An active collaborative attitude would greatly help to form an expected degree of flexibility

For projects blending old and new, it is true that similar concept and projects can be found in other cities. In Singapore, the concept of blending is originally imported from overseas. However the specific integrated control system developed based on this blending concept is unique. All the factors: an influential government with political stability, single level administration structure, vibrant economic and large market demand as well as unique geographical position, contribute to forming such a system. The existence of this integrated control system is closely related to the context, especially the political and economic environments. But once it is formed, it would be applicable to similar situations.

Though the integrated control system in Singapore is constantly developing, its basic structure has been shaped which could provide a potential model for other countries. For

countries that already have similar system, the system in Singapore would be a good reference for them to adjust their own. For countries that want to do projects of blending, they have to recognize that such a system is needed and has to be developed according to their own situation. For others that are going to or have begun to form such a system, the forming process in Singapore could provide valuable experience for them, especially for some developing countries in Asia that share similar conditions with Singapore.

Limited by the scope of the study, this dissertation stops at the above discussion. There are still a lot of issues that deserve further studies. Trying to find the most effective way of improving the integrated control system would be one of them. A systematic evaluation of the blending projects is also a potential direction for future work. However, only one study, studies in one field, or even studies only are far from enough, much more effort from all aspects are needed to further improve our urban environment.

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Appendix

Appendix 1 Urban renewal Examples: Beirut and the Canal Front of Brussels

Beirut

The reconstruction of Beirut Central District is one of the typical war recovery urban renewal projects.

The history of Beirut could be traced back to the beginning of 19 century as a commercial port while the emphasis of economic activities moved from inland riverbank cities to coastal cities because of the application of steamship. The trend of modernization in the early twentieth century also attacked this city. Under the impact of late Ottoman reforms and of French Mandate urbanism, Beirut was recast from a walled coastal town to a westernized port city.¹⁸⁵ By the late 1940s, this city had grown into a prime port on the Eastern Mediterranean and a highly competitive break-in-transport pole for reaching the Middle Eastern hinterland.¹⁸⁶ From 1943, when Lebanon gained its independence, to 1975, Beirut was developed constantly.

The Lebanon War began in 1975 and lasted 15 years. The central area and port were paralyzed and the infrastructures were heavily damaged. Fortunately, there were still

¹⁸⁵ Robert Saliba *Beirut City Centre Recovery: The Foch-Allen By and Etoile Conservation Area* Steidl, 2003. P 12

¹⁸⁶ Ibid. P 39

some lucky areas where most of the buildings and the urban fabric remained. It was these areas that provided the background for the postwar reconstruction.

The reconstruction began in 1990. Aiming at recapturing a lost centrality, renewal projects emphasized on the quality of the public domain to enhance the urban experience for old sites and inner district streets, squares and frontages.¹⁸⁷ To restore people's confidence and sense of pride about the city is another goal of these renewal projects.

To date, the recovered old district has been transformed into a catalyst of the city's development and symbol of its historic identity, opposed to its prewar role as a predominantly port-related business district¹⁸⁸. The renewal of Beirut Central Area is a good example of quality conservation and rehabilitation at regional scale after wartime.

Brussels

The Canal Front, which is the name of an urban renewal programme in Brussels. Brussels has a river that crosses the city from north to south, the Brussels canal. Dated back to the 16th century, this canal had a profound effect on its surrounding districts. However the economic function of the canal was replaced gradually by more effective transport method and the area along the canal began to decay. By the end of the 1980s, the canal area became the dark corner of inner city. Though not far from the city centre and the most popular shopping street, this area was famous for its spare of people and negative images.

¹⁸⁷ Ibid. P 61

¹⁸⁸ Ibid

People began to search outlets for this area. From the end of 1980s, numerous urban redevelopment schemes rose in this area including housing stock rehabilitation, public areas improving as well as commercial development.

After 15 years, the length of the constructed canal front has been broken up by a more liberal implantation, a pavilion style largely achieved through small squares and gardens located behind fences, and lovely spaces through recessing. What complement this exterior fragmentation are the interior atriums, corridors and mezzanines.¹⁸⁹

Two facts of the site are important during the market-oriented redevelopment process: the first is its excellent location; the second is the water which is the main attraction of this area. Both of them could help to raise the value of the land which was an important fact to the developers.

The Canal Front today is a compromise between the criteria of the public authorities and the indispensable real estate developers, investors and architects. Hence, what has emerged is not so much a succession of eclectic buildings, but the fruit of a constant architectural direction and conceptual philosophy.¹⁹⁰ The Canal Front is also a case of the inner city redevelopment.

¹⁸⁹ Atelier D' Art Urbain Architects, Canal Front Urban Renewal In Brussels. Images Publishing, 2004. P23

¹⁹⁰ Ibid

Appendix 2 Profile of Projects

LAVENDER PLACE 95

Owner: Lee Rubber

Company (Pte) Ltd

Architect: S A Chua &

Associates



Located in the Jalan Besar Secondary Settlement where a 4-storey rear extension is allowed, the development retains the main buildings of 11 units of Art Deco shop-houses and integrates a new 4-storey extension at its rear.

The project retains the continuity of the streetscape whilst maximizing the development potential of the site through the creation of new and additional floor spaces at the rear.

TORIEVIEW MANSIONS 96

Owner:

Torie Holdings Pte Ltd

Architect:

3P Architects



Located in the Geylang Secondary Settlement where a new extension is allowed up to the Development Guide Plan height and plot ratio, this pair of two-storey Art Deco bungalows were restored and integrated with a new 8-storey condominium. The bungalows which were well set-back from the road and converted into two maisonette flats each, could be seen through a double volume opening creatively punched through the 8-storey condominium.

The project demonstrates the possibility of conserving worthy old buildings with no loss in commercial viability.

NOS. 299 TO 309 JOO CHIAT ROAD 96

Owner: Vintage Development Pte Ltd

Architect: Liu & Wo Architects Pte Ltd



Located in the Joo Chiat Secondary Settlement where a 4-storey rear extension is allowed, the development retains the main buildings of six two-storey shophouses of the Late Style and integrates a 4-storey extension at the rear.

The overall effect is that of a cozy budget hotel with a sensitive awareness of the past.

YUE HWA BUILDING 97

Owner:

Yue Hwa Chinese Products Pte Ltd

Architect:

OD Architects



This part six- and part three-storey Art Deco building located in Chinatown, originally built around 1936 as a hotel, is adapted into a modern-day departmental store. Most of its original features such as balconies, brackets, cast-iron arches and other architectural features were retained and carefully restored. A new extension at the rear, designed to harmonize with the existing conservation building, bears its own distinct contemporary architecture.

This is a challenging project involving old and new buildings with adaptive reuse.

ASIAN CIVILISATIONS MUSEUM 98

Owner:

National Heritage Board

Architect:

Public Works Department



This three-storey building, designed in the "Eclectic Classical" style, was once the Former Tao Nan School, one of the earliest Chinese schools in Singapore. In 1991, a decision was made to convert it into the first wing of the Asian Civilisations Museum.

Extensive restoration and repair works started in 1994 and were completed in 1996. Every effort was made to retain the significant original fabric, the inherent character and the spatial quality of the building while adapting it to museum use. Only elements which were irreparably damaged were replaced. A new three-storey rear extension block with basement, in keeping with the spirit of the old building, was added to cater to the additional needs of the museum.

It was transformed into a museum with exhibition and storage facilities of international standards. It was gazetted as a national monument in February 1998.

CHIJMES 97

Owner:

Chijmes Investment Pte Ltd

Architect:

Ong & Ong Architects



This involves the restoration of two monuments, the former CHIJ Chapel (designed by Father Nain and built in 1902-1904) and Caldwell House (designed by GD Coleman and built in 1842), conservation buildings and introduction of new buildings to complement the design and adaptive reuse of the existing old buildings.

The project is sensitively and tastefully restored, resulting in an integrated multi-purpose use complex of the highest quality.

2 to 13 ST GREGORY'S PLACE 98

Owner:

Hotel Grand Plaza (S) Pte Ltd

Architect:

RSP Architects Planners & Engineers (Pte) Ltd



This project entails the restoration of 10 units of two-storey conservation shophouses of the Transitional Shophouse Style and the construction of an L-shaped ten-storey new building to achieve a harmonious integration of the "old with the new". The challenge was to ensure that the conservation shophouses are not overwhelmed by the new building. An atrium was introduced to harmonise the conservation shophouses with the new building. The "rear" of the shophouses was redefined to provide the shophouses adjacent to the atrium with the double frontage linking the old and new, both visually and spatially. The new hotel buildings and podium maintain their contemporary feel but draw some classical references from the conservation shophouses. The resultant image is an embracing form where the conservation shophouses become the heart of the development within the "arms" of the contemporary hotel.

53 GRANGE ROAD 98

Owner:

Spring Grove Development Pte Ltd (a CDL-
Marubeni Development Joint Venture)

Architect:

RSP Architects Planners & Engineers (Pte) Ltd



Built between 1888 and 1890, this two-storey conservation bungalow was once the residence of the former United States Ambassador to Singapore. It was sold together with the land in 1992 for a condominium development and subsequently integrated within the development as a club house.

CAPITAL SQUARE 99

Owner:

Capital Square Pte Ltd (A Keppel Land-Rodamco Pacific
Joint Venture)

Architect:

Architects 61 Pte Ltd



The project involves the retention and restoration of two streetblocks of 19 two- and three- storey shophouses and the construction of a 16-storey office building in the China Square Conservation Area. They are primarily for office use except the first storey along Pekin Street which is used for shops and restaurants to create activity-generating uses at the street level to complement the Pekin Street pedestrian mall. The conservation buildings were integrated with the new office building to create a unique architectural identity with complementary components.

NO. 36 CLUB STREET AND 23 MOHAMMED ALI LANE 2000

Owner:

Citystate Properties Pte Ltd

Architect:

RSP Architects Planners & Engineers (Pte) Ltd



The project involves the restoration of two 2-storey Early Style shophouses and a block of 4-storey Art Deco building within the Chinatown Historic District. All the original features of the shophouses were retained and restored. The original central corridor layout on the upper storeys of the Art Deco building was maintained. A new jack-roof and void were added to enhance its interior. On its exterior, air-conditioning condensers were cleverly concealed behind timber grilles. The buildings were connected through an opening in the ground floor party wall. The unusual terrain of the site was exploited to introduce a new underground wine cellar. The final product is a combination of faithful and innovative restoration.

GAMBIER COURT 2000

Owner:

A.C.T Development Pte Ltd

Architect:

GP Design



The three 2-storey Art Deco terrace houses in the River Valley Secondary Settlement were once residences of gambier plantation owners. They were high-ceiling, long units which extended right to the end of the plot. The main buildings of the terrace houses were retained with the rear portion redeveloped into a 10-storey apartment block. All the original architectural features of the conserved buildings were retained and painstakingly restored. An air-well was introduced in each of them to enhance its interior. Great care was taken to integrate the old with the new and some design motifs from the conserved buildings were repeated in the apartment block.

HOTEL RENDEZVOUS, 2000

Owner:

Hotel Rendezvous Pte Ltd

Architect:

SAA Partnership Pte Ltd



The project involves the restoration of 9 three-storey Art Deco shop-houses and the construction of a new 11-storey building at the rear. The design of the new building was inspired by the conservation shop-houses, whose lively decorative features were retained and restored. Between the old and the new, an open courtyard serves as a focal point, sharing the same axial alignment as the existing splayed corner entrance. Crowning the hotel is a billboard resembling that displayed on the shop-house roofs in the 1960s to the 1980s. The balanced blend of old and new adds architectural richness and a dash of colour to the neighbourhood.

NO. 1 DALVEY ESTATE 2001

Owner:

Mr Ong Teng Cheong

Architect:

Ong & Ong Architects Pte

Ltd



This two-storey Art Deco bungalow, located in the Whitehouse Park/Nassim Road Conservation Area, was designed by Frank Brewer and built in 1927. The owner chose to restore the outhouse together with the main house and add a new two-storey extension at the rear.

All existing decorative mouldings including the sunrays brick arches and rough plaster corner buttress piers were carefully restored. The oriel windows and window openings in geometric patterns were retained and restored. The internal layout was adjusted to suit present day living while respecting the bungalow's character and spatial quality. An attic was created in the roof space over the two-storey extension, with dormer windows for light and ventilation. The result is a sensitively restored bungalow with a well-designed new addition.

NO. 24 NASSIM ROAD 2001

Owner:

City Developments Ltd

Architect:

TEAM Design Architects Pte Ltd



This two-storey Victorian-styled bungalow, located in the Whitehouse Park/Nassim Road Conservation Area, was built in the 1920s. The owner chose to conserve only the main building and add a new extension beside it.

All architectural elements were either retained and restored or reinstated to original form. The main entrance was relocated and a new porch built while the old entrance was transformed into an extra room. The front verandah was restored and kept open. Important internal features like the original stained glass panels, wrought iron grilles, the internal stair and the light well with its moulded plaster panels and jack-roof were retained and restored. The internal layout was reconfigured to cater for comfortable modern living

NO. 12 TAI GIN ROAD 2002

Owner: Sun Yat Sen Nanyang
Memorial Hall Co. Ltd

Architect: DP Architects Pte
Ltd



The project involved the restoration of the Sun Yat Sen Villa, a gazetted national monument, the construction of a new annexe block at the rear directly above the North and South MRT tunnels. The building, which opens onto a generous front garden, now houses the vast collection of documents and art-crafts associated with Dr Sun Yat Sen's activities. All architectural elements, such as classical columns, timber doors and windows, cornices, filigree fascia and cast iron railings were retained and carefully restored. A ramp was introduced between the old and the new buildings to bridge the floor level difference. The garden with the statue of Sun Yat Sen was maintained and even the 100-year old Angsana tree at the entrance is kept.

NO. 62 HILL STREET 2002

Owner: Singapore Civil
Defence Force

Architect: PWD
Consultants Pte Ltd



The project involved the restoration of the Central Fire Station, a gazetted national monument, the retention of the Annexe Block and the construction of a new wing that respected the character and scale of the monument. Priority was given to retain the inherent spirit, spatial quality and fabric of the monument. The firefighters' quarters which were no longer required were demolished. All additions and alterations to the buildings eg pitched roof over the 1926 addition and lean-to-roofs at the rooftops were removed. The monument was restored and upgraded to meet its modern needs as a fire station with a part of it turned into a fire museum. The result is the rejuvenation and reinvention of an old fire station into a modern one with a rich heritage value.

THE LOTUS AT JOO CHIAT 2002

Owner: Casuarina

Properties Pte Ltd

Architect: Liu & Wo

Architects Pte Ltd



The project involved the restoration of a row of eighteen 2-storey shophouses fronting Joo Chiat Place, and the construction of a new 4-storey block with 32 apartments, a basement car park and private communal facilities like swimming pool, playground and a "mini" kopitiam.. During restoration, timber and steel bracing were used to support the brick columns and walls. Deteriorated bricks and mortar were removed and replaced with new ones, and the walls replastered. The rear of the shophouses were creatively turned into a beautiful second frontage that complemented the front. The new apartment block had mouldings and panels similar in design to those of the shophouses so as to create synergy between the old and new.

SANDALWOOD 2005

Owner:

Breezeway Development Pte Ltd

Architect:

SCDA Architects



In the midst of the varied architectural styles found in Joo Chiat, Sandalwood comprises twelve two-storey Late Style terrace houses and four two-storey Art Deco units. They form a pleasing junction of modernity and antiquity through the seamless fusion of their traditional façades with the modern facilities and a modern condominium behind. The brief for the architect was to restore the conservation houses and to integrate them with a new five-storey residential apartment block to form a unique development with communal facilities.

Source: <http://www.ura.gov.sg/>

Appendix 3 Transcript of Interviews

Interview 1

Time: Oct 10th , 2004

Venue: MAUD Studio, Architecture Department of NUS

Interview with: Mr. Goh Hup Chor

A: Author

G: Goh Hup Chor

G: First thing is that you must go back to the history of the area here. China Square used to be rows of houses very close to the Singapore River or the old shop houses. It was also as part of Chinatown and all this area. In earlier time the building there are in very poor condition. They looked at the whole central area. There are three areas actually all the lands required by the government.

The government with intention, they took these lands, to redevelop this whole area actually mainly for housing. And this area is one area. Bugis Junction is another one and the last one is further than Bugis Junction. In late 70s to 80s, there were a quite for purpose to demolish the whole land to build for new people. After some period, the government changed their mind to put public housing into this area. That's why you see Honglim Complex. But subsequently the government found it is not quite right to build all housing in this area because they found too many area grow up in the same way such as Tanjong Pagar, and so on. They were all shop-houses. So after the government decided the change of mind, most shop-houses were gone. So Bugis Junction was a jump, where there were still some shop-houses so the government decided to lend this piece of land to private sector. We had to do the mater plan. So took Bugis for a instance, Bugis Junction what we did was a plan, we always decided that we were interested in conservation of all the shop-houses. Yet, we know that all the houses were not included into the mission. So we need to have, the whole idea is to have new development with old development, because the conservation of Chinatown is conserving the whole district. Nobody can change. This area we thought will be very charming, to bring in, what we call, new building with old building. The new building what is the use is going to be?

Let me draw a map. This is the OCBC Building; it is the end of the golden shoe area. And this is the CBD area. And China Square is here. Without China Square, the other area are office, nighttime is dead. People in CBD have nothing to eat at lunchtime. So China Square used to be a old-dated, had to be a lot of street, lanes and school area. So people who work there have a lot of opportunity to go and eat there. So we noticed that China Square should have life at night, it is very

important but how to introduce life at night? Two ways can generate nightlife: you have residential which can generate activities, and you can have shops or entertainment activity, there would be nightlife. So we thought China Square is a good opportunity for life and work to support the CBD. At the same time we also tried to introduce life into Chinatown conservation area such as some hotels. So we thought it will be good to generate life to all around here by putting housing or hotel into there. So it was our plan. So in the final early plan, there were hotel, residential, commercial and so on. But the idea is to keep some of the old building and have a lot of new building, so it came some new and old, new and old like Bugis junction. That was an example of Bugis Junction, that was the example we sold this land for; for hotel, for residential and others. So we supposed to do more Bugis junction on this site. As the development goes on, of course some of the real estate; hotel at that time, during that period, during 93,94 economics was not so good, hotels was not popular. So the government decided to let the tender to build just what they want, so they change the area into white site. White site means it is a free zone that you can choose. So obviously, area close to the office district, people choose office. The offices in CBD are very expensive, and offices on the marina centre, half the price. So of course the developer interest is to go for offices. But if we put offices there, it changed the planning intention. It means that there are no nightlife there, and therefore, activities and shops. Our intention was that to bring this area hotel, residential, and shops, which can bring people inside out. Now people can eat there at lunch time but there is no nightlife because they put offices on top. It is lack of residential and activity, as a planning I feel quite disappointed. But this is the decision of the division because of hotels were not demanded at that time. There was residential demand but the government did not decide to put them in. But of course during the period 1993-1994, as a office land that is very good. Obviously everybody rush to the office there. We just not satisfied with the planning strategy. As the planning strategy, we should have not changed the land use. If there is no hotel, then it should have residential. This is where political decision and planner do not see I do I. So that is something the policy drives the development. But in some way when situation changed at the point of time, if the government could took the planner's advise seriously, to say: ok, we should introduce hotel and residential into this area. or even people who had build residential would have been successful. It was not difficult for them to add some residential into this area because it is very clear along Singapore River. Now the Robinson Quay area was planned as hotel, residential. The whole idea of that area was hotel and residential. The whole area was full of resident. It weakens the intention of the mark of plan. The whole idea was to push the offices obviously to marina bay. Here is where the bay is. They push the row into the bay. You saw the master plan, the whole idea was to push the offices into the bay and this would become our new CBD. But at that time, the political decision was that and that is a very bad planning because we are moving the offices back and now we are short of one term to build that even the developer who now tendered this site would say that there is no demand for office space. Then they have to build residential. But here should be new offices and government left them as white site. We sold white site here and sites near the

beach road. They built a lot of office there so a lot of people become officers and take their demand of offices away. And now we are short of office demand to build in marina bay. So this is the result of the planning intention and the actual implementation change because changing time during that time there was no demand. So that is a learning lesson here: whether the principle to have white site everywhere is a right thing or not. I leave it to you.

A: Another question is China Square was divided into 7 parcels. Is there any special reason for this?

G: Yes, we have some guidelines. We marked the soft lands, the roads, the buildings there, and some buildings we want to keep before we divided. So we wanted to produce a mall system that goes through and links the MRT. So the MRT station is here and another station there. So the idea was that this system should help to bring people from stations to here. So we thought it must be a good idea to make use of some of these shop-houses. We marked these houses and we underlined the houses. The very bad one we have to clear out to make the developer build and at the same time keep the old shop-houses. So that would make a very interesting look. That is we wanted in this street. So that concept was high and old which would give you a transition from CBD to Chinatown in terms of urban design scales. So what we need is marking what we call the soft land, which means you can build. Then we have to make sure there were high blocks and make sure allow them to build car park. We had to do what we called simulation. We also work for implementation section. All the development we had to leave them to individual developer but some times they must come together to make sure the mall would be fully completed. So we had to work very carefully. But detail I can remember because we do it everyday but of course I know the process.

A: What about the cooperation between URA and the developers or the architects during the proposal review process?

G: They must comply with the guidelines very strictly. So for the developer they had to go back to the URA. They subject to the review panel. The design must show to URA and URA will review. If the developer had any extra requirement, they can ask URA to get some change. There is an example. It is the car park in Far East Square. In the URA's earlier concept, the building should architecturally harmony with conservation. In this area we never see Buildings with glass they much look like old fashion. For the conservation building, they must keep the front because we want to keep the character of the building. When they want to have some change, they must provide the proposal to us. A good example is the glass car park. A normal car park would not get approved of URA because I was there. If you show a normal car park I would say no because it would contribute to the urban design landscape. So the car park must be treated properly. So that is why they put the car park away from the houses. They use glass. I can accept glass. It is a modern material, no problem. And you have to do that space well so that the old building and the modern one can co-exist. It is ok now. But the early design was very bad. I can not remember. But I rejected it. They design a building with

clock towers like old building. I said no, can not. If they come and want to build a building character to HDB hawking centers, I would also say no. So this is object to design review. And we have to choose whether can or not, so all the buildings are subject to the design review.

A: What is your opinion about today's China Square?

G: The architecture, for an instance, such as the tall building of Great Eastern Square, that building is too heavy. They used colonial styles, and some classical and new classical styles. So that building, we say, is not matching the old ones. If you want to build a big building, you should make the building a bit lighter. Lighter means the glass building or something. It is ok that we have modern KPF building, no problem. But you must not build a building very heavy. In that sense, architecturally, either contrast, neither comparability, or try to be the style. It is not the style. It should be in scale and in character more in harmony with the others. So that building is massy. It just likes a muscle man standing beside in the middle of kids. So that is a kind of view that is not so good.

So some of the area, the success of the streets, the paving, and something it is ok because they achieved the ambiance. But in terms of huge, it's all very wrong; office use is not good at all for the area because it supposed to inject life. You should either in residential, which would be in character because residential you could build them in scale. So is not good to build office block there. But about the architecture style of the offices build there, I have no problem. But usage is not right. So my concern is office use is not a right choice for this area. It should have been residential or hotels which would go very well. They would support the Singapore River and Chinatown. Now it becomes office.

Now there was some nightlife actually, but only local people eating there. If there is a hotel, people would come down to eat, shopping or walk around. But now you only have food. There are not many shops there.

We call our city jewelry. It has many activities zone. It needs a necklace to join them all. In that moment, we are short of these necklaces. We though this is a way to produce this necklace link. That was the intention. So if we ask whether it successful? It is successful today. The food is there. But the other issue is that would that be better? They made the buildings high and low. That is good. Architecturally I accept that building. The rest are ok. As a urban designer except the heavy building.

Its success is because there was shortage of food provision during lunchtime. In CBD there is no food for normal officers. They are not big boss who can go to restaurants. There were not enough places for the working population. But we provided food for the work population. So this made this place a instance success. But it is not successful at night, which was supposed to be successful because the idea is making this align and cross CBD, plus the Singapore River and the whole place become alive at night. But now you look office, they are all close up at night.

It is success because it provides food for the working people but it is not at night. Even if you put supermarket or more shops there, people can shop there after work before they go home there would be more life. But they would not put a super market there because it is not compatible with the offices. So the streets under the office building are all dead.

This area is not included with the conservation area because it is a quiet area. Land is been taken already. This area is blank. The government acquired this whole area but the government changed its mind. So what we did is we planned this thing (drawing). So at first the government marked the conservation boundary. And then they changed their mind to make more continuity, because in earlier times Hong Lim Square area is made as public housing in the central area. But public housing is not a right type of housing. So the government changed their mind. Because public housing in the early 80s, they can only build 3 room flat. Public housing is not right formal housing because it does not help to make the city beautiful. So the government changes its mind. So we as planners kept some of the old buildings so we tried to generate Bugis Junction. Bugis Junction is on the other side of the city. We want to make Bugis alive. So Bugis Junction is more successful. There is more hotels. And that is my feeling. We can have one parcel of offices but the rest should be hotel or residential. But they chose offices because offices are very much cheaper to develop and you can rent them out. For hotel you have to put a lot of capital. You have to furnish the room and other things. And the residential of course you have to cut it up and you have to sell them.

Today in area near China Square, there become residential because offices are not cheap any more so they want to be residential. Even closer to the CBD, on top of the MRT, you would see such a land for residential because it is the best land value today. That is how decisions are made.

For learning purposes, it is using of new buildings and old buildings, the concept of transferring, their use of conserving building, the transfer of plot ratio of the new building are very good experience. In terms of environmentally, it is also very interesting, because the old building give you the space of time and experience, they give you the charm of the past at the same time you use new building. These old building especially here related to conservation area, it is a transition node of urban-scape. Take care of changing time. Because usually you go to a all brand new building, it look terrible because it is a period of time. no matter how you build and how beautiful the building is, it is also one period of time. so when you have experience of old building and new building, you mixed the periods of time together and there is a transition. So it is the charm.

The second learning lesson is do you go for white site. This is another thing you have to be careful. Here is an example. They allowed the white site policy then this destroyed the planning intention. This is one good learning lesson here.

Another thing is that you make a few dollars that link the land for office use but you have to infect on your surrounding intention of conservation the street, connectivity and so on. So you make some money of office use but you can destroy a lot of things. So as planners you must be careful. Planning is important to see the bigger picture. The land value in a piece of land is not very important. There are also other values related to the white. That is very important. So that is something learning lesson here, a classic example. Boat Quay will be more successful even the one in front of Fullerton that building would have been more successful. Of course Chinatown would be more successful by you adding more residential and more transition population. You will create life there. So that is the value that is a good lesson. You can not adjusting by you set white site you make a few dollar more, that is to me very wrong. So that is a classic example. Other lessons could be: The linkages are also important implementation also can be done that means we still can have a very nice mall because there are so many developers, and yet the environment there are quite interrelated, coadunations of the guidelines. Then architecturally they are actually besides those ugly building. Anyway it never looks so bad.

A: How the government got these lands?

G: It is compulsory acquisition. The law makes the government take the land from the privacy and they paid them by compensation. There are some guidelines for the compensation. For example, for shop-houses, they have to pay you amount of money; I cannot remember the details now. All the residential, if you were residents in shop-houses, the residents would have the priority to HDB housing. Because at that time there was a long queue for housing, they allow them to priority to jump the queue. That means you allow staying where you want to go. But if you get the money, you have to pay. It is not exchange. If your require housing, I give you priority. If you are shop, also give your priority of shop. Then HDB has build shops and factories. So the government gives you rental protection a little bit. I mean initially I would charge you, say, 10 dollars, then, next year, 50 dollars, it is progressive increment of the house rental, so not actual full rental, it is subsidized rental for three years. I forgot the time. it should be a short period. Then it will be full rental. So if you are a shopper, then you can go another HDB for shop. The HDB will help to give you a shop. Then you pay a rental. But they give your rental protection in a short period. If you are a factory such as furniture making, also HDB have a lot of industrial flat. Then you can go there. But they do not give them for free; they just give priority after the cash compensation. So the cash compensation, the residential is a mount, industry is a mount, and so on.

Lands were acquired by government in the same period. So before development, the land had already collected by the government. it is long time ago they did it. I would say this one would be in the seventies, late seventies and eighties.

So before the development and the land collection, the land was totally quiet, it supposed to be all demolished. They suppose to clear the site. Then it was supposed to do a public housing before the government decides to change the

mind of public housing. Then the government changed the direction, city area may be not good to have too much of public housing. Then it comes the oil crisis, there was a recession; the land was left quite empty for a while. And the resettlement process declined. So you have to look into the old URA annual report.

Interview 2

Time: October 20th 2004

Venue: URA Centre, Singapore

Interview with: Mr. Looi Min Chai

A: Author

L: Looi Min Chai

A: This area was divided into 7 parcels. Is there any reason for this?

L: Yes, there is a story behind actually. Let us go back to the history of this area. We started by doing the historical and conservation study. We noted from the historical study was that this is the area next below to Singapore River. The dividing rules are actually the urban pattern in this area. if you look historical plan of Chinatown, the streets of China Square are already there in 1820s. For a instance, China street, Peking street and so on. So actually our dividing rules are existing urban pattern. If you look at the parcels, the street and road pattern there, the parcels are basically following that. But what we did was when we began to look possible development option of this area, we had a few choices, because it is very near the raffles area, at the time either we take the option to redevelop the whole area for new development to complement the financial district, but we also studied another option to keep all the old shop-houses. And then the land was divided into smaller parcels. But at the end we decided to combination of the two. A parcel contains both new building and old building. We try to make a balance between the old building and the new building. We also created parcels for new development. In a way the old and new buildings were mixed from the beginning. We basically created a mix of old and new type of development and then we developed the urban design from there.

A: So from the very beginning, URA already has a perspective of old and new when they divide the parcels?

L: Yes.

A: Is it deliberately to make this area different from Chinatown?

L: It was actually. Because we realize that this area is near CBD, it would be problem if we want to just keep everything in the same way to Chinatown because there was strong request to develop and to expand the CBD. At that time we need more space for develop the existing downtown.

A: How the cooperation between the URA and the architects goes on during the process?

L: Before we start, let me show you a picture. I should mention that the urban design concept actually is to keep the old shop-house around the central spine. So we could have low rise from the CBD from the middle of China Square to Chinatown. The shop-houses along the edges actually had been demolished for road widening. So we decided to keep the central spine of conservation building. And having vacant land on the edges, and combining the vacant land together with the shop-houses into one parcel. So each parcel would have some shop-houses and enough vacant land to build substantial new buildings. So that to make it as attractive as possible to the developers. The parcel C has most shop-houses except the car park.

The parcel nearest to raffles places were actually for more high rise office development, because they were seen as part of the CBD except for parcel B which we planned for food centre to cater for the demand in the area and also because that was kept as part of the central spine from this end to the other.

After the land sale, the entire proposal had to be submitted to the URA submit control for planning approval. So basically, the developers and the architects had to submit the plans to actually this counter here or now you can to it electronically. If approved, URA would give a written permit, after that they go to BCA, but that is another story. So basically, when they submitted the plan, URA would access the plan. In the case of URA sale sites, URA planner will compare the submission with the urban design guidelines in the sales package to see whether they complied with all the requirements. So that is the mechanism but usually URA can review the design to see how well it comply URA's urban design guidelines. But at the same time we also leave the developer a chance to request of proposals changes of guideline. URA would evaluate to see whether this change could be allowed. We do not say no straight if the developer has a good proposal or idea to make the development better. Then we do seriously consider it or amend the guidelines. That was what actually happens in China Square.

Let me show you some examples, Parcel B it say that the proposal was very close to the sales guidelines, so we did not leave them to wait. And we want to highlight that the guideline are actually control the urban design not the architecture language such as the architectural style or the design of color or whatever. So we don't like to try to influence the architects, the design language or the style, but mostly the urban design, especially like how the development related to the surrounding, the pedestrian network, vehicular network, and open space, how well they do in context, especially in a case like this. How well does it linked to the surrounding conservation buildings and the open spaces? So mostly, we try to guide them to related contexts. That is the key of the urban design guidelines. So if the developer can convince us that their proposal is actually improve and help the building to related better to the surrounding, then we would definitely consider it very seriously. For a instance, the parcel C which is Far East Square, the original guidelines are actually ask for the new car park station to relate to the

old shop-houses next to it. We were actually thinking at the time that the developer would do something possibly with the colonnade cover walkway, something in old looking. But instead they give us a proposal a very modern looking building that is contrast with the shop-houses. But we thought it is ok because the intention was to play with the contrast between the old and new rather than try to make the new buildings look like the old one and it may not be honest to architecture expression. I think we respect that so in the end we allow him to go ahead. After that a lot of other people did some other condominium proposals with a kind of very modern look of new building in contrast. So I think that was quite a good thing from the point of you because it make different from the past when People tried to make new building looks like the old one.

One other thing of this area is that parcel C actually had a big open space in the middle. Originally there is a big open space behind the shop-houses, that's why China Square was named. In the sales guidelines, we actually identified that here for open air eating because we want to keep what it used to do before. But the developer proposed to cover it. Today it is a culture pavilion. We also allowed that because we thought that it would add the life here and it could used for cultural performances and could attract more people here. Similarly at the pedestrian Amoi Street, we supposed a open pedestrian mall, and the developer also proposed to cover it for that it would became more comfortable could be used at any time of the day, no just at night. We thought that is a good idea, so in the end, we allow it. But there was some implication about the GFA. The covered area is in GFA and uncovered area is not in GFA, so in the end we have to allow more GFA to the developer. Actually it was mainly for the covered open-air area behind the shop-houses.

One other thing that can demonstrate the coordination is the pedestrian mall, the construction of the park along Church Street and some amenities. Basically, these developers were supposed to do a little bit for the pedestrian infrastructure. But the design had to coordinate with other and we related authorities. URA actually help to coordinate them through meeting with the developers, architects, and those authorities about the agreement on the design, materials, and who will build what. Here is an example: the pedestrian mall along Peking Street. Two third of it is supposed to be built by parcel E and one third of it is supposed to be built by parcel C. The elite developer proposed kinds of design and materials they want to use. So we couldn't leave them as that because our pedestrian mall will be two-thirds as one design and one third as another. So we got everybody together. And manage to get everybody to agree to a common design. The material, what kind of granite, in the end we decided on granite style and particular color and what kind of tree to plant along this mall. What kind of lighting as well. So that help to make sure the coordinate, the public areas will be a whole consistent design in material and quality. We do not do the development ourselves and we let the developers do whatever they want. If you go to China Square today, you will see that we did not let Far East Square using a gray and multicolor kind of material within the development, but what we want is a pedestrian mall to become continue.

Another thing is that sometimes the developer would have problems, which did not concern URA, but we tried to help them anyway. Like during the construction, for a instance, about electricity for a instance, sometimes they would come us for help, it is possible we also tried to hold a meeting to invite whoever included and try to coordinate. Because in the end, we will charge the planning of the area and we want to coordinate and make sure everything goes well and problems will be solved.

A: What is your evaluation about today's China Square?

L: I am quite happy with the result because the overall development are realized our original concept. They had the combination of new and old, the new activity area which connected Chinatown and CBD. The concept of keeping the shop-houses along the central spine as a kind of activity corridor was also quite successful because a active area quite a lot of people who working in CBD into the area. perhaps the design of some of the building could be better, some of them did a better job of integrating the old and new, but that is quite out of our control because we do not tell the developers how to do the details design. It is really up them. Some did a better job than other. Some of them actually proposed a much more radical departure from our guideline than other. But I think all the variation about the guideline we allowed, actually them will make this area more interesting. An example is that, the developer of parcel F and G made a big plaza in centre, which was not originally supposed to be there. I think it help of form a new kind of space of activity, which added to the area.

A: I heard from Hup Chor that this area should have more residential. What do you think about this?

L: Yes, we were hoping for that actually. When the area was still all of shop-houses, I think there are a lot of people living there. And we tried to reintroduce residential use into this area to help to introduce activity there, especially at night. So we sold some parcels with the option for residential use. I think the last parcels were sold as white site. So the developer could choose to have residential use if they wanted to. Unfortunately they goes for mostly commercial use, especially for parcel G, they tried to introduce some home-office. In some point of view, it should have more residential use, but I think it is up to the developer and market demands. It could not have as much as residential as we want. The option is so open because the white sites allow changing land use if you want to. So in the next time if the markets need more residential use, the developer would change the use to residential. It would be better if there were more residential, but in the future, the use can change and the developers can upgrade or redevelop a building to respond to market.

A: Do you have any future perspective of this area from this point, such as adding some nightlife here?

L: I think from this point it is really up to the developer. It is quite beyond our control already and up to the developers, what kinds of activities or uses to put

into the development, whether they decided to do any redevelopment or major changes. It is really up to the developer. But I think URA try to do the coming out of a good concept plan, trying to conserve the key conservation building in the area, and infrastructure, pedestrian amenities, have enough space in the guidelines so that the developer can respond to market demand. That is all we can to then the rest is left to the developers.

A: During the whole process, what stages URA had got involved?

L: Not only the planning and urban design, but actually planning stage, urban design, sales, the whole sales, and during the construction stage, I think we still play a active part. I think it is even after the development has been completed, then we go over the developers, then they tell us how they rent the place, how they manage the activities, events, software. The lease is for 99 years; URA was involved in the first two years.

A: Are there any special stories happen during this process between URA and developers?

L: Yes. Sometimes we did not quite agree with what the developer's proposal, for those, we have to do more intensive dialogue with the developers. Just give one example, China Square Central, Parcel F and G were actually sold more or less the same developer. So the developer had submitted a proposal to demolish quite a few of the shop-houses and created a big square in the middle of the development. We cannot say yes because that is conflict with the concept to keep the shop-houses and keep the pedestrian mall along the centre of the area. so we work together with the developer. And in the end we manage to agree on having a smaller plaza. There were already a few shop-houses missing from the street block. So we make use of it to create a smaller plaza, but still keeping most of the shop-houses we want to conserve. And keeping the pedestrian mall in the central rather than having a big central plaza, which we thought it, was not compatible with the original character of China Square. it was more about three block and narrow street rather than a big open space. That is a example that we couldn't give everything the developers what they want. They tried to reach a compromise and to me that was reasonably successful because the developer still has an open space to hold events and activities and to me the plaza is quite intermediate in term of human scale, which is better than the original big plaza.

There was a change of plan when we sell the lands. Actually we want to sell Prudential Tower at first, but at that time there was a flat drop of office demand, so the first two parcels we sold eventually were Far East Square and the food centre. And then we went back and sold the office, Prudential Tower and Capital Square. I think sometimes during particular year the market changes then we do changes on our sale strategy and so as other parcels. You know that our sales, we change our sales programme I think every half-year. So sometimes they do change more for particular type of development for the demand change. Then

they can change a few programme, change the types of parcels. The urban design keeps the same just change the order of parcel sales.

These sale publications actually help us to sell because the publication for one parcel actually helps to generate the sale of next parcel. So before we launch sale sites, we usually do a price release, what we tried to do was when we sell a parcel we want to give a quick whole concept of this area and tell people what had already been developed and what is coming up in the future. So that the developers go and bit for just one parcel but they can see a larger plan

Interview 3

Time: Nov, 20, 2004

Venue: DP Architects, Marina Square, Singapore

Interview with: Tan Lee Xiang (Director of DP Architects)

A: Author

T: Tan Lee Xiang

A: What is your original perspective of Far East Square?

T: The original design was to conserve 51 shop-houses and make a very modern car park. Two things happened during the construction. One is that the developer wanted us to have a pavilion as a venue of culture. The other one is they wanted a covered street. So those two things were added in the middle of construction. They are different from the original perspective.

A: Is there any difference between the developer's requirement and your design ideal in this case?

T: In fact there was not much difference.

A: Is there any difficult when you communicate with the developer? Or there is not any at all?

T: No, there is some but not big. For us architects, we want to design buildings very comfortable with more corridors. But when we started to work with the shop-houses, we found that it was not possible because the shop-houses have different heights, different structures and different places. Our contradiction or our disagreement with developer initially was that we want to so-called create an ideal of this place, an ideal corridor so that the spaces are very much a modern office. But soon we discovered it was not possible. We have to make spaces to be a very cut up because of the walls. Of course the developer did not like that. Be we persuaded them we have no choice. The other one may be the difference of opinion about the corridor design. We want to make them bigger for comfort but they want the corridor as narrow as possible for economic efficiency. Given such

a corridor you have to turn left right and left, we did not like it, to be frank with you. But when we finished, we are quite happy we did it because it bring back breathing for the shop-houses. When the corridors are narrow, you can discover the links more. We concerned the attendance are not so invited but it feels actually ok.

A: Did the guidelines of URA bring any difficulty to your design?

T: Actually the conservation guidelines are very difficult to comply with. It is rather than obstacle, I think it allows us to do quite a number of things, for example, the linking out of shop-houses 7 and 8 to form a big office space. In some countries, I don't know which may be those with strict guidelines; they won't even allow you to do it. But in URA case, they allow you to stitch something on the wall. That made it possible to link the shop-houses as one. So the guidelines are strict in some way but the rest are quite flexible.

A: Are there one or two guidelines very hard you have to ask URA to change?

T: The guidelines are general. In some cases it works all right and in some cases they don't for the same guidelines, maybe because shop-houses have too many types. For example the guideline about conserving the first three meters of party wall. It is OK when the shop-houses are long, and you have more space to create opening up to there. But in some case it is not when the shop-houses are very short such as the three meters become half the wall, then it becomes obstacle.

A: Do you think you can handle those guidelines well?

T: So far no big obstacle to the way we comply with the guideline.

A: I found that in the land use of URA there can be some residential or hotels in this area. But in this design, there is no such area. Is it the requirement of the developer?

T: It is the land-use for the land tender. They limited us to only commercial use. But I think some residential use actually would be good for this place.

A: How many rounds URA reviews you have experienced during this process?

T: Surprising to us, it did not take us many times to get approve. Even the very modern car park did not have much problem. So when they got the covered roof in the middle of construction, there were some problems to get URA approve. Overall, URA was quite cooperative.

Interview 4

Time: Dec, 22, 2004

Venue: Tongji University, Shanghai, China

Interview with: Mr. Sha Yong Jie (Professor of Tongji University)

A: Author

S: Sha Yong Jie

S: 上海新天地是 96 年开始做控制性详细规划，99 年样板房开放，01 年全面开发。这个项目之所以质量很好，有很多方面的力量，但是我觉得瑞安公司的现场的力量是最大的。现场的监工做的工作非常好。

A: 这个项目是规划中就有还是个别开发商的行为？

S: 我所知道的情况是在 90 年代中期，他们想做这块地方，想改造这片地区。92，93 年上海开始大规模的建设，90 年代开始整个上海有一个任务就是要把欠债了几十年的居住问题解决。要把住得里弄全部拆掉，造新的。这是个非常好的初衷。退掉了 300 多万平米的房子重新造。当然，那个是棚户区。到了 90 年代中期，大量的房地产开发已经启动了。市场上已经远远不止这个量了。于是就把很多很多还是农户的，质量不高也不低的房子更新，就在做这种工作，就是为了改善老百姓的居住条件。其实老百姓是很欢迎高层的。那么这个事情在做到 90 年代中期的时候瑞安，他们是香港公司，因为新天地这种模式在美国已经有很多了，他们就提出了这样一个想法。政府当时的要求就是 因为那里有一个人大会议址在十字交叉口上，政府就要求那附近的几栋房子需要保留，但是地块内不允许造超过 4 层的房子。他的容积率是一定的因为高度有限制。不能把房子都盖高了，人大会议址就压在下面，周围四个角的房子需要保护，就这一点要求。

有 2 个背景，一个是他想把整个太平桥地区 50 公顷整个保护下来，这可以参考我们那本书，有 16 到 17 个地块。所以最早就提了一个规划方案，新天地只是其中的很小一部分。只有 3 个公顷。概念就是这个地区是一个历史保护区，其他地区要大规模的建设。这是令其他地区升值的重要手段所以政府当时是欢迎的。但是政府完全不知道他们会怎么做，也不相信他们会这样做。当时肯定是好事，要保护，要改造，可是我们没有这种经验。这个是中国第一个例子。对于外国人的工作，大家也是在将信将疑中尝试的。这样把房子盖出来，结果就成功了。96 年的时候做详规，99 年的时候样板房已经开放了。

当时开发商有这样一个想法就是当时他们要把店面卖或租出去，但是没有人会相信成功，于是他们就做了样板房，很多人去看了，都觉得非常好。

当时的政府并没有看到这个东西的价值，中国的变化非常快，从 96 年开始，这 78 年发生了飞快的变化，很多人已经出国留学都回来了，但是在 96 年大家还什么都不知道呢。国内人看到觉得很惊喜，但是当你到美国，欧洲转一大圈回来就会觉得就是这样做的。但是难度就在于，唯一和国外不一样的地方就是我们做的即使不是最顶级的阶层，也是中上阶层使用的。而普通人，还没有能力享受。

我还很清楚的记得 在 96, 97 年的时候，那时候最迫切的任务是要拆掉那些旧房子，让老百姓的生活得到改善。而这个项目做出来比我们想象的时间早一点。非常有利的促进了政府的意识，让政府知道了这个事情是对的。这个城市靠经济增长，靠修高架桥确实能吸引一些投资，但是政府没有文化，心里是很慌得。文化是显示政府重要的一个标志。我相信这是我所了解的情况，他们知道有这么一件事，至少告诉他们这个老房子不能全部都拆掉，也就是今年开始非常非常严格的只要能不拆的全部都不拆。是这届新政府要做的重要的工作。它毫无疑问走在了政府的前面，因为毕竟这个做法是国外来的。政府不可能是走在世界的前面，这个是没有没什么可解释的，任何的包括房地产开发的项目都是先把国外的东西引进来，然后慢慢的获得政府的认可，再跑过来调控。

在三个方面：政府，开发商，建筑师的三个方面中，我认为建筑师是最弱的。但是我们一直愿意把建筑师放在里面而已。建筑师只不过是把人家的想法完善，只有极少数的人他们给出一个想法，而且建筑师放在中国，这个想法还可以说一说，但是放在西方世界，这个想法并不是很高明的一个想法。所以我认为这个游戏并不是一个建筑设计游戏而是开发的游戏。知道今天，中国还是有很多引进的西方的做法，像嘉年华之类的，但是它们没有成功，它引进了一个在国外很成功的例子但是在中国却没有成功由于错误的时机，错误的地点，或者相关配套跟不上。我认为这就是一个舶来的想法，但是到合适的时机它就成功了。作为我，一个中国的建筑师来说，当一个城市的决策者来看到这个项目就会对我说，请你到我们的城市看一看，哪块地方能够保护下来做个新天地，我现在就不动它。这是很好的一件事，如果是以前，他根本想都不想这个问题。我记得我亲自带了一个市长去那里，刚好陈健邦在那里就给他讲了一下，并告诉他所在的地方就是当年江泽民来的时候在的地方，他就坐在那个房子里。那时在新天地 1 号会馆的 3 楼，一个专用会议室。其实就是以前中产阶级大宅的一间主卧室改造的。地板还是那样破破的。他下来马上就跟他的助手说我们那个房子不能全拆掉了。必须找一块留着。当然他们很可能去复制新天地，但是他们认识到这些房子的价值，他们对自己以前所作的事情有反思了这个是最好的结果。你要希望他马上就结合他自己的情况去有他自己的方法我想那是不现实的。要不是这个例子，这层纸我们永远都捅不破。现在我们所有的人一来了外国的教授就带他们看一看，这很好的证明了中国的一个发展过程。

但是这还不是一个系统的理论，这个改造成功了，下一个如何来改还不知道。大家都没有办法。这个的造价当时是大概 1 个平米 1 万。窗子全部重新修理一遍，地板重新修理，拆掉旧的，换木头，又刷漆，做成跟旧的一样。这些都很花钱。当时他们建设的费用很高。就算当时的一个里弄单元大概 150 平米，将里面的 2 户先迁走，搬完以后还要修房子，那修房子的钱谁来出？这个帐是没法算出来的。这个办法从设计上来说非常非常容易想，但是生意上的帐算不出来，至今也没有一个人去算。现在就经常有人来批评我，说我要把这个地方拆掉造成高楼，如果不造成高楼，你告诉我还能有什么别的办法？那些老太太，你要是问她，她就会说我就想住到这个楼里去，你不能遏制她这种想法。但是对城市来说，又希望能将一些东西保持。城市中心区这种低密度开发，基础设施什么的成本都非常高，作为普通消费者确实无法承受。如果我们有足够的钱，那我们确实可以这么做。一个是拆迁房，老百姓搬走一定要给一个地方他们住的。如果把他们全部搬出来让买得起的人去住那个房子，那一平米也要有 2 万块左右。这只是纯粹的低价的费用，如果在加上修缮的费用，开发商还要从中赚钱。开发商如果没有经济收益，他为什么要做这件事情？我们做了几个项目，还有保护，做到最后就变成如果要保护这几个建筑，旁边一定要有一个高楼。现在政府对动迁的老百姓越来越优惠，现在动迁的周期也长。像这些问题都不是设计的问题，这些问题都牵扯到经济和社会。没有可行性就不是一个办法。对我来说我们现在面临的最大的问题就是我们不做那种高级的东西，我们还要把它做成普通的东西，至少可以给中产阶级用，比如年收入在 15 万左右的人，他们能住得起。有人希望政府能给钱，但是政府哪里有钱？政府希望拿到这些卖地的钱来补贴建什么重点中学阿还有学校的高等教育等等。他们还指望这个钱用呢，你希望他拿出钱来是不可能的。

也有人想再做一个新天地和这个竞争，希望把这里的客源拨出一部分，在南京西路一段这个地区。但是没有人敢投资。另外也有其他人在其他地区想做类似项目，但是那地价和投入产出算过之后是不可能的。我觉得对外国人来说非常难理解的这一点。

前段时间有人探讨政府应该做什么。但这是不对的，应该交给市场做。我建议你先去了解一下上海的背景，离开这个背景什么都别说。在 90 年代是政府非常明确的建设时期，90 年的时候上海住宅形式非常严峻，十年时间，当然这十年很快房地产的炒作就开始了。从 2003 年开始注意这件事情，划了一些历史保护区，优秀纪念建筑，现在这批建筑达到了 300 多个，现在正有第四批第五批在做。很难说具体怎么做，但是他们希望把要保护的地区全部勾勒出来不去动它。否则每天都有人跟你讲要地，而批地又是城市建设不可或缺的一个环节。政府想要在两种东西中保持一种平衡。我们学校有教授到规划管理部门去做，所以知道他们也很头疼。政府也认识到，当然现在政府官员的素质跟 90 年代的已经完全不同。我们知道的江泽民从到中央开始一个过程已经循环完了，上海市的市长也换了。现在政府官员的素质也比以前提高了好多。他们中也有博士毕业的也有留学回来的也有大学教

授。政府非常强，政府也认识到政府强势是不对的。城市发展应该是自发的，国外的市民自己控制的。我们现在这个市民的责任感并不强，就算是给他权力他也提不出来，这个必须要承认。这个我们还要等一等。但是至少我们希望市场运作起主要作用，政府只是起个审查监督的作用。为什么政府不去做这件事？因为它没有这个能力，它实际上只是一个协调者，制定规则的人，按这种规则来协调大家的人。他们现在只能做到，知道要保护这块地，但是也不知道怎么保护，只能等待有人要开发它。这牵扯到上一个社会形态留下的问题，需要一个商品化运作的方式来解决这些问题。政府会有一点力量，但是这些力量只能在与配套设施的建设，和批土地优惠政策的方面。但是这些优惠的钱并不是大头的钱，

作为普通人目睹最近 8 年 9 年这个过程，我们相信那些国外的方法一定会在这里运用上的。但是怎么来启动，是哪一個力量还在酝酿。大家都在思考。新天地似乎可以说是一个多方面都比较好的例子，政府觉得它不错，设计师也觉得没有什么可以批评的，然后它自己也赚了钱，我们希望在有一个灵感，它一定有的，它在那里，我们都在等不知道是谁先提出来。这里面你可以很明显的看到我们跟英国比，跟美国比跟新加坡香港比我们的差距，我们毕竟管理的经验不足，商品的力量也缺乏。那些高商品房买得人都是来自香港台湾，如果离开他们的钱，这个市场还会不会繁荣？他们是融资，他们就很可能撤股，他们只是在寻找投资。

新加坡的政府是很强的也是很有经验的，规划人员也有设计能力，制定的文件都很长，而我们的官员不行，他们都是正经的官员却坐在需要专业的位置上。这需要时间。还有开发商，他们抱怨很大，他们都宁可做新地。改造利润很低，周期长，他们不做的。不过他们现在做那些都是在积累自己的力量和经验，总有一天会有人回来做这些改造。就像现在做设计一样，地方远的不做，钱少的不做，太麻烦也不做，等到真的没什么事情做得时候，总会去做。这一天到来应该不会太晚。

另外我觉得你写这个文章，我觉得中国政府是需要的，我也会愿意看到这样的文章，看看新加坡怎么做，因为我们下面就会遇到这些问题。但是到了中国又不一样，很多地方都没法比，但是在新加坡背景下的问题和这个问题完全不一样。很多新加坡学生也都要面对中国市场。新天地解决的就是一个观念问题，下面的问题还很多，包括设计问题，保护技术问题都是困难。在这个阶段一定是解决了观念的问题，下面该是操作方式，开发商，政府，甚至设计师规划时理念的怎么结合。再下面才是设计问题，现在根本还没有讨论这件事。我们建筑师真正发挥作用就是在设计层面上，现在还没有到这个时候。

我现在也在做一点城市规划设计的东西，我们已经安排了一些年轻的学生在找保护的方法，技术，不管理念和模式，只是一些具体的技术，真正到做的

时候就有准备。这个模式的成熟大概需要 3 到 5 年的时间，因为我们已经在想了。

Abstract:

In 1996, the detail planning and urban design for this project began. The showroom opened in 1999 and it was completed in 2001. The efforts from many aspects led to the good quality of it. But in my opinion, Shui On made the most contribution.

In the middle of 1990s, they wanted to develop this area. Housing problem was one of the urgent tasks for Shanghai government from the 1990s. The old houses were supposed to be replaced by new ones. It is a good starting point. By the middle of 1990, many real estate developments had already launched. It was at this time, the developer proposed this scheme. The requirement of the government was to conserve limited houses around a historical monument. And the whole area should be lower than 4-storey.

The original proposal was to conserve the whole Taiping Bridge area, which was around 50 hectares. But at last, the development was limited within 3 hectares. Since it was the first trial of this kind in China, nobody trusted them. But after the showroom opened, many people were convinced.

China is changing very fast, especially after 1996. Many people have come back from abroad since that year. But in middle of 1990s, a development of this kind was still a fresh idea for most Chinese people.

This project actually makes the government recognize that the old houses can not be totally cleared. It goes beyond the government. I think the architect is the least important one. He just developed other's idea. The project is not a game about architecture design but about real estate development. Today, some decision maker of a city would ask me which part of our city could be redeveloped as this project. And I would keep it untouched. But they would never consider these problems before. You could not expect they have their own solutions but at least, they recognized this problem. That is most important.

But this project is not replicable now. After this project finished, no one knows how to do the next one. The construction fee and the relocation fee are very high. No developer is willing to do a project without enough profit. It could not rely on the government either. Some people would ask for the government to do something. But I think we should leave it to the market. The market should lead these practices, and the government is actually working as a coordinator. What they could do now is to mark the conservation area and then wait for developers.

I think the methodology applied in other countries would be useful in this country. But we do not know how to trigger it. This project is just a case with some merits. But we still lag other countries in many aspects. The government of Singapore is

very strong and experienced. The officers and planners are all with professional capacity. But our offices don't. Most of them are lacking professional knowledge but take up a position need this knowledge. We still need some time.

I think the experience in Singapore would be helpful for China. The difficulties Singapore confronted is probably waiting for China in the future. But the context is different. The main contribution of Xintiandi is introducing the concept. But some other issues such as management and design, we have not discussed them.

Actually I have already arranged some students to research the technology to prepare for the future. A standard model might need 3 to 5 years. We are already thinking.

Interview 5

Time: April, 15, 2005

Venue: ADDP Architects, 61A Tanjong Pagar Road, Singapore

Interview with: Lim Meng Hua (President of ADDP Architects)

Singapore conservation began before 1980, when the governments send a team of professionals to Australia to study others cases.

Once, there was a street in china town, selling coffins and things related that. People from china without any relatives and families here live there to look after the shops and waiting for some day come. Then URA came and moved these people out in the name of conservation. In fact the conservation in Chinatown is not totally successful. If it used more scientific method to doing the conservation, it would be better. The wet market should be kept as a traditional market pattern.

Tanjong pagar was another project. URA made some models first and held an exhibition. After that invited private tender to do developments with guidelines such as keep the front of the shop, keep the wood floor... but some of the unimportant part could be changed such as break up some back walls and second floor walls.

China square central had 108 shop houses there. In 1995 the tender began. F was tendered first by the client, and gave it to ADDP Architects. But they told the ADDP to wait since the developer want to get the other pieces of land in this area. So the design could be done as a big development with more potential. First floor was used as retail. The guidelines of URA constrains that the front of the shops could be break up as well as the back-lanes and back wall.

The design process began in 1996. But the economical depression made the process stops for 1 to 2 years. During that 2 years. The developer were keeping

requiring URA loose guidelines so the development could be done as some western countries did as lively as possible.

About the square, in the beginning, the area around the square was occupied by shop-house experienced some fires. So they are in quite bad conditions. So the architects suggest breaking the bad shop-houses to build a square there to hold big events.

The architects invited consultants, the dean of Harvard Univ. to study the possibilities of the square. This time URA was quite cooperative, they listened to the consultants' suggestion and agree to build a square there. But the original square is not like this. The proposal of the architects was a big square goes through the whole two parcels. A big car park was under the ground of that. In that case, there will be another pedestrian corridor from south to north till the Singapore River. Combining with the previous pedestrian street, a cross-shaped pedestrian system was made. But because the pedestrian mall in the middle of the two parcels did not sell to the developer, which was to say that street still belong to the government and the pedestrian mall was an important element in the urban design concept. So URA refused to spread the square into two parcels.

According to the architects evaluation, only 25% of the totally requirement they asked for URA was permitted.

After visit some site in US, they decided to make a complex with food, retail, and entertainment together in a huge one-stop center because after the two parcels were united into one, it provided this possibility there.

At that time, a new kind of living pattern began to popular. That was SOHO which means to work and live in the same place. In Taiwan, some IT companies put their workers into this kind of house, which was a very free space without any constrains. The workers themselves could divide the space by themselves. Very creative people live in this kind of house to doing some design and related jobs.

So the architect's intent to import this kind of pattern into the area to bring more live into the site and make the area become a 24hour 7 days alive. But this intention confronts the strong constrain from the guidelines of URA. The SOHO residential requires big spaces but in the guide lines, except the front of the shop-houses should be conserved the walls between the shop-house should also be partly conserved with a percentage of 50%. This made it impossible to gain any big spaces on the upper floor of the shop-houses. The architects required the URA the looser these guidelines, but to keep the whole area under one standard and keep the fair of the tenders, their requirements were been refused. But the architects did not give up yet; they did some alternative proposals with smaller spaces to accommodate the SOHO units. But this time, the problem came from the economic aspect. According to the proposal, if the SOHO units were complete, the rent will up to 4000 \$ for a month to recover the expense. There are only few people could afford such a price. In fact, some of the similar cases in Tai Wan had

declared at last because the market comprised by the IT companies was not as big as people think.

To evaluate, the architect said the method used in Far East Square to make a glass pavilion on the top of the shop-houses should be questioned further, whether it was correct, as conservation should be reconsidered.

The URA is not very proud of Bugis Junction, though it was quite successful in the meaning of economic because it was connected with the MRT station and good accessibility.

In Far East Square, no residential was provided, which was not good for bringing life into the area. In China Square Central, the architects did add some landscape design into the back-lanes of the shop-house, which could provide leisure places for the people supposed to live there. Though at last he SOHO did not come into this project because of the market, the landscape in the back-lanes were kept. Now part of the upper floor was occupied by a kindergarten. People who work in the CBD or offices nearby leave their kids here. The landscape of the back-lanes was used by this kindergarten.

Nowadays, the first floor of the shop-houses was retail shops and the upper floor is used as office. The developer of these two projects still keeps 100% property of the whole site, which could demonstrate the strength of developer. URA should give more freedom to this kind of developer instead of just constrain. To import life into the area was the idea from the developer.

An example was that, to avoid rain goes into shop-houses, the drainage authority required the first floor of the shop-houses should be up grade half a meter. In that case the space of the first floor would be diminished. So the architects and developer suggested to lift the second floor of the shop-house by re-build them. This proposal was refused either. So the proportion of the shop-front in this site was a bit different from other original ones. The architects also required having more windows facing the big square in the sidewall of some shop-houses. Since this could increase the effectiveness of the square. URA again, refused this proposal.

In fact, looser guidelines were allowed after the completion of the project. The percentage of the conserved middle wall has gone to 30% instead of 50%, which was the requirement to the ADDP. But it was too late. In fact, they want to change this site a huge complex to hold everything in it. There was also proposal of a big cinema-plex with 6 cinemas in the southwest build in the site. But this plan was abortive because of the pressure of the market.

Interview 6

Time: Apr, 19th, 2005

Venue: Bugis Junction, 200 Victoria Street, Singapore.

People: Mr. Chan Sui Him (Chairman, DP Architects Pte Ltd)

Prof. Heng Chye Kiang (Head, Department of Architecture School of Design and Environment, NUS)

C: Chan Sui Him

H: Heng Chye Kiang

C: 先讲一讲新加坡有关这方面的历史。(新加坡)80年代以前就是很简单的城市重建。从80年代中期开始有几位外国人来到了新加坡,觉得新加坡这样子发展下去有问题,提出要保留 identity. 这几个外国人是关键人物。一个是 Peter Keys, 另外一个叫 Norman Edwards. 他们有写一本书是关于新加坡建筑的。他(peter)是我的好朋友,已经过世了。Edwards 应该还在英国。另外一个叫 Pamela Lee 是李光耀第四个弟弟的老婆,影响力很大,但她不是新加坡人,是夏威夷人。

H: 她刚刚有写一本书: **Singapore, tourism & me**, 里面有写新加坡这段历史的,很重要。

C: 这几位就觉得新加坡的做法很不合适。如不保留那些还存下来的比较旧的建筑物,新加坡好像完全失去了它的历史。到80年代中页,新加坡正在集中建设。那时候他们就想建好像三马路那边一样的 High Rise Apartments. 这种阶段中国也正在经历。这时候这几位就开始发动那种思想,那时候 Urban Renewal 本来是在 HDB 里面一个 Department. 七十年代中后期, Urban Renewal 已经从 HDB 转出来成为了 Authority. 那时候那些 Authority 人员有一位相当重要的就是 Goh Hup Chor. 就接受了这个思想。同一时候,美国 USIS 就邀请了一批新加坡学者包括陈有利,还有林文进等等去美国参观了两个月,参观美国城市如何把一些旧建筑保留下来,新旧要如何搭配。这些就是一些背景了。

从那时候,85年以后,(建设)开始就慢下来了。很多要发展成祖屋的地段都停顿下来,包括这个地方(Bugis Junction)。也就是说那个时候那些旧的建筑物已经都被政府征用了,都没有人用,也就没有人修补。慢慢就出现问题,漏水等等。墙壁,比如说,都是很薄很薄的砖,而且砂很多,都不是很好的材料。5年时间后,几乎都很破败,难以修复了。

H: 主要是因为没有人住也没有人维修。在我们东南亚就是这样,屋顶已开始漏水,水就很快渗透,腐烂结构。

C: 那个时候是1990年,有两个项目,一个就是这个(Bugis Junction),另外一个就是在 Albert Street 的 Albert Hotel。(对于)这两个项目,政府就提出

了一部分保留，另外一部分重建的想法。不过那个时候，Singapore River 的 Boat Quay 已经是肯定保留了，只是还没有开始有商店搬进去。怎样的保留法我相信你已经知道了。主要就是必须保留立面，后面可以建成四层楼。同样的在 Bugis Junction, 他们也是说好你们可以保留 2 层楼，后面可以建成 6 到 8 层。整个地块分为三段，保留下来的建筑物主要是这样分布（画图），沿中间一段分布，其他的没有了。其他的可能他们也是认为太过破旧，难以修复了。因为这中间一段存留的比较多，所以一开始就让我们建成 4 到 6 层，另外的保留房屋不多的一段，可以让我们建 13 层。而最后基本没有保留建筑的地段，可以建到 16 层。卖地的时候，这些都已经大致定了。

- H:** 他们的策略已经就定了，因为他们在算这个的时候，他们本来是三块地，他们把这边的一个面积大概整合之后知道大概可以盖多少面积的房子。如果我没有记错它 plot ratio 大概是 3 到 4 这样子全部都已经规划好了。
- C:** 当时规定建筑必须要用瓦屋面，甚至高楼也要都用瓦。那个时期全部都是这样做，因为那段时期，（政府）派了一批人去外国，他们所看的东西就是 Keeping in Keeping. 要保留就要类似的保留法。即 Conservation in a content of environment. 就是旧的用瓦，新的也用一模一样瓦。不像 Far East Square, Far East Square 已经是 5 年后的事情了，那时候是不一样的概念。那时候拍卖的时候是三个不同的地段要交给不同的 业主来发展。我们的 Client 知道假设分别去投标，都投中的机会不是很高。他们跟日本的公司，就是 Seiyu, 还有印尼的一个发展商，三家合作来把这块地买下来。Seiyu 是 Intercontinental 的老板，另外一家 Parco 也是属于他们的。Seiyu 也是属于他们的，是很大的一个财团。这个财团在 90 年代中叶和其他日本财团一样受到了股市低迷的影响。同样的印尼的财团，他们本来是印尼的第二大财团，不过他们对新加坡市场不是很熟悉。所以那时候主要是 kepper land. 那时他们主要是做 project management. 他们原来主要是做 Shipping 的业务。这些发展商看好这个地方，因为我们这里有 MRT， 不远的地方就是 orchard。Orchard 是已经形成了的。Raffles city 再往上第二个站就是这个地方,(位置)肯定是好的。

发展商把地段买下来以后就由我们设计。

URA 叫我们保留这些建筑物（画图）。你可以在这边建新的建筑物，也可以在这边建新的建筑物。那时候 MRT 已经开始发展了，这边的土质是 Marine Clay, 是一种非常软的土质，好像流沙质感一样，我们这些（需要保留的）建筑物是 1890 年到 1920 年间建造的，地基是依照传统方法，使用生长在红树林里的木材做地基，这种木材可以耐水，但是如果有水进入里面，很快就腐烂。做法是很奇妙的：全部以摩擦力来承重，用很多木桩（插入土中）。我们就延续了这种东西，在我们的方案中，我们向政府提交了我们的 Report, Architectural proposal report, 向政府说明他们这样的做法是不对的，因为他们规定我们可以建 4 到 6 层的建筑，但是不可以有 Car park

building 在地面层以上，必须要放在地下。因为 URA 认为景观很重要，四周的景观都是很好的景观，就不可以有地上停车楼。因为有地上的停车场对于地面上有不好的影响，人流就被切断了。因为有保留的建筑，所以地下停车场的结构不是很整齐，弯弯曲曲，一般来说，一个 car park block, 所有面积包括车位，道路，大概是 30 平方米一辆车，如果是非常非常好的建筑师可能只需要 25 到 28 就够了但是地下的肯定是 35 平米以上。在这种情况下，做不规则形状的形状则需要 45 平米。我们当时提交了两个方案，第一个方案是按照 URA 要求做的（不规则形状的停车场）另外一个依据那个时候在英国，美国，所谓的 moving house 的概念，就是把建筑物暂时移过来，建造好了以后再移回去。这种技术运用（在欧美）已经是普遍了，所以我们就提出了把旧的建筑暂时移开的概念，就可以把 Car park 做成一整片而不像刚才所说的不规则形状。这种做法建 Car park 就很容易了，所以我们很希望按照这种做法做。现将整个的 shop-houses 移走，将 Car park 建起来再把 shop-house 移回来，包括地基。但是我们的（对于苛刻的停车场而提出的修改 guideline 的）要求，政府根本不听。我们的甲方都是影响力很大的发展商们，他们不是考古学家也不是历史爱好者，这种移动的做法只是因为是在欧美这种做法对于商业区是很有益的。记得那个时候已经有两个很著名的项目一个是伦敦的 Homen Garden, 另外一个 Eil Market, 在德国这些都说明了新旧结合的商业区是很有益的。这些项目的影响力也很强。我们这个项目，预算建设费是 300 million 新元，我们估算按照原来 URA 的要求的做法需要大概 350 到 400 million 而且效率不高，因为那些弯弯曲曲的轮廓很难做。有效的面积不够。所以甲方就不愿意，就要求政府官员重新考虑。URA 就很不高兴，一直到今天，因为（最后）他们（甲方）利用影响力把 URA 的要求都破坏了。而我们提出的把房子移走的方案，甲方也不愿意，以为这样要多花 50 到 100million. 因为他们的预算是 300million, 而这个做法 URA 是同意的，因为还是保留。基本上还是旧建筑都保留了，而且欧美都已有先例，所以 URA 是同意的。甲方却不同意。甲方认为，作为商人，100million 是几年的收入。当我们把这个方案交给甲方，甲方先是觉得可以，算出来价钱以后就不同意了。多了大概 50million。甲方不同意，就要求拆除旧建筑，然后再重建。

- H:** 因为建筑师认为完全按照 URA 的要求做非常没有效率，就提出把旧建筑移走在移回来，就可以把房子保护下来，可是这个预算太高了。于是就有两个选择，一个是按照 URA 的做但是效率很低，另外一个移开了在移回来。
- C:** 现在来讲讲具体的建筑师的（设计的）做法。除了 urban design 的 consideration 以外，还有新和旧的考虑。新和旧如何联合？我们来谈谈这件事情。就是还没有定下来拆除以前，我们建筑师按照移走所作的方案。那时候，我们聘请了英国的建筑助手。这个英国公司和我们公司的历史几乎是同时开始的。在英国保留古建筑改造成商业区的做法很普遍。我们有聘请他们过来做顾问，我们也有去英国考察，看看新旧结合是如何做法。他们给

我两个意见，第一个意见就是，用新的比较简单的做法去 reinterpretation 旧的东西。不可以太过简单到完全不像样，也不要太过复杂。第二个意见就是新加坡的天气很热，可以适当改善旧建筑物的气候环境。他的意见很好，我就接受了他的意见。等一下我们四处走走，我可以指给你看一些具体做法。新的建筑物跟旧的建筑物在一起时怎样的做法。URA 的做法是连在一起，我们的做法是不连起来而是强调区别。我们要有一个很简明的做法。旧建筑物比如说是层高 2 米高度，新的建筑物是肯定要高于 2 米，比如 4 米或更高，新建筑不需要按照旧建筑的规格来做，等一下可以给你看我们是怎样处理这个高差问题。另外一个就是屋瓦，屋瓦实际上是一种历史的记录，历史上有的屋瓦，但是今天已经没有了，所以现代建筑的屋瓦不一定要一模一样，新建筑物可以用现代的屋瓦，旧建筑物用以前的屋瓦，这样新旧的关系就很明显了。

- H:** 其实这整个 block 就是新的加旧的，新建筑在必要的时候为了整个立面的衔接，需要比较一致的处理手法，否则就以现代的做法处理。从设计到用料都是比较现代的做法。
- C:** 这种做法是从德国汉堡的项目学来的，还从瑞士请来了工程师，具体做法我们研究了很久。就像这个玻璃屋顶，你看上去大部分是蓝色的天空，而 Far East Square 的做法就不一样，结构要厚重一些。我当时想街道上要有树，所以就用了好像树杈一样的构件。这个项目可以说为其他类似项目提供了经验，像 Far East Square 和 Fullerton Hotel，他们的 car-park 都离开保留建筑物很远。所以他们的停车场都采用不同的策略了。

Abstract

Let's talk something about related history. Before 1980s, urban renewal was prevalent in Singapore. From the middle of 1980s, some foreigners came. They thought it was not right to develop like this and the city's identity should be kept. They are some key figures. One of them was Peter Keys, another was Norman Edwards. Pamela Lee was the third one. In the middle of 1980s, intensive construction was happening in Singapore. All people want to build High-rise buildings. These key figures introduced the concept of conservation into Singapore. An important officer in URA, Goh Hup chor, accepted this concept. In this period, USIS invited some Singapore scholars to American to see how conservation was conducted in some American cities.

From this period, the intensive construction in Singapore was slowed down. Many sites supposed to build high-rise HDB buildings were left, including the site of this project. At that time, all the shop-houses had been acquired by the government. No one live in them so they were keeping ruining naturally.

In 1990, the government proposed the idea of selective conservation. At that time, the Boat Quay had been conserved. The main façade were kept and the 4 storey extensions were allowed at the rear. In Bugis Junction, URA also said that the shop-houses could be kept in that way. The whole area was divided into 3 parcels. Shop-houses were mainly in the middle parcel. So on this parcel, we could only build 4 to 6- storeys and the other two could build 13 and 16 storey. Clay tile roof was required for all buildings because at that time, all people were doing this.

Our client was made up of three very big companies, one is from Japan, another is local and the third is from Indonesia. URA asked us to keep these old buildings. The soil in this area is Marine Clay. It is very loose like sand. The foundations of these old buildings were made up of a kind of wood. The loading is mainly balanced by fraction. They would use many wood columns into the sand. In the condition, URA asked for a underground car-park building. But because of the foundations of old buildings, the shape of the underground car-park would be irregular. Normally, one car park unit might need 30 square meters on average. But in this situation, it needed 45 square meters. We complained this to URA. We proposed two proposals to URA actually. One is made according to their requirement, the other one is introduced the concept of moving house. It was a popular concept in western countries at that time. It means moving the old buildings out of the site temporarily. With this concept, the construction of car-park would be easier. But our complaining about the car-park was not accepted by URA. The budget of this project is around 300 millions but the proposal complying with the conditions needed 350 to 400 millions with low effectiveness. Our client asked the URA for reconsideration. The proposal applying the concept of moving house was also not accepted by the client since it would cost 350 millions. URA actually had accepted this proposal because there was still some conservation. When we submit this proposal to our client, they changed the mind after they know its cost. So the client asked the offices over URA for demolishing the old buildings and was approved at last.

Now let's talk about the architecture design. How the old and new were combined in one project? We did a completed architecture design according to the moving house proposal before the demolishing was approved. We invited consultants from UK. They gave two suggestions: one is to re-interpret the old. The other one is to improve the physical environment of the old. We accepted these suggestions. How to do it when the old and new came together? URA would like to link them. But we would stress on the difference. We learned this method from Europe. The technology took much of our effort such as the glass roof. You would see most of the blue sky from inside. But in Far East Square, the structure would be heavier. This project actually provided experiences for others such as the Far East Square and the Fullerton Hotel. Their car-park buildings are far away from conserved buildings.

Interview 7

Time: Mar, 23th, 2006

Venue: P&T Consultants, 24 Raffles Place #23-00 Clifford Centre, Singapore

Interview with: Mr. Lim Chai Boon

C: 我先来讲讲相关的背景。这个就是新加坡河的规划，1994 年的。这片区域就是 Riverside Village, 这个 Central Mall. 主要用地就是娱乐和商业，F&B. 旁边这块地也是当时同时期标的，主要是 food court。但是后来没做起来，没有人气。这块地的南面一块是一块永久地契的地。西北面有一个庙。这块地本身有一部分保留建筑，包括一些 shop-houses 和一个 warehouse. 中间这一块是 URA 规定的停车场。新加坡的地包括永久地契和 land sale 的地契，一般是 99 年，像这块地一样。这块地就是 99 年的租期。当时我们标地之前，南面的永久地契上面是一栋写字楼，有 6, 7 层。这栋写字楼本身就属于我们的业主。为了保护原有的永久地契，令为因为这栋写字楼本身已经比较破旧，业主想把它重新翻修，另外还要加盖一个停车场。正好这个时候，ura 推出了这个地段，里面包含有一个停车场。还和原来的写字楼相邻，位置对于业主来说很好，而且这个地块价钱也不贵，于是我们就出了一个方案，业主就把这块地标了下来。

标到以后就交给我们做。这块地主要就是商业和娱乐。我们把要求中的停车场和原有写字楼的停车场连起来。现在这块地本身没有自己的停车场入口，而是要通过写字楼的入口进入。这个是业主要求。另为对于保留建筑，URA 给出了很严格的保护的 guideline，材料，颜色，门窗都有严格规定。我们就按照这些规定把那些旧 shop-houses 保留下来，这是在用途上改变了一下而已。对于那个大仓库，我们原来是打算做 4 个 cineplex 在上面，但是后来做不起来，没有人气。像这种仓库，在以前的新加坡河沿线是很普遍的。原来都是靠水运，货物来了船就开到河里面来，找一个地方停下把货物卸下。所以新加坡河沿线的这种仓库是很多的。但是现在就没有多少剩下了。整个这个建筑设计的过程并没有太多的波折，因为我们是严格按照 ura 的要求，该保护的就保护起来，中间的 public space 也留出来。中间的那个 public space 是 ura 规定要留出来，我们给他留出来让他们来完成。整个 riverside village 中间有一个条形的 public space，有一条步行街在加上一个小广场。这些 space 都是考虑到地段的东面有一个清真寺，里面有一个塔。所以步行街和小广场都是朝向这个方向的。

关于规划，这个新加坡河的 1994 年的 guide plan 就是我们在设计时候的主要规划依据。但是这个规划有很大的问题。首先这个地区被列为新加坡河规划区但是一点河的好处都没有占到。虽然绝对距离不远，但是一条大路把这片区域完全和河隔离开来。中间只有一个天桥。实际上路对面的那块地也是同时期标的。这个天桥也是规定由开发商建的，但是我不记得是哪一边的开

发商了。另外在这块地的西北面的口是一个很重要的 city 通往这块地的入口，但是现在这个入口被一个 building 完全遮挡起来，使得这个区域很难被那个大路上的人看到。

另外再说说 urban design. 这片地区 URA 把它分成了很小的地块，交给不同的开发商发展。这个也是这块地区没有人气的重要原因。每个地块都交给不同的开发商发展而缺少一个整体的控制。每个开发商就只按照自己的想法和利益发展而不顾及别人。这就造成了这块地缺少一个整体的吸引力。什么都有，有住宅，商业，f&b.却没有一个重点，而这些住宅又不够多到可以支持这些商业和娱乐的数量。Ura 就想要不同的开发商开发的那种各种各样的 diversity。那都是书本上的理想，但是事实不是这样的。如果当时能交给一个开发商开发，有一个很好的整体开发的规划，相信不会是现在这样子。或者把这块地这几个开发商都集中在一起好好的商量一下。但是现在就是自己开发自己的，不顾及别人的利益。这些都是 URA 的问题，我们没有办法。

设计的过程中，URA 也没有留太多的空间给我们，那些保护的 guideline 非常严格。如果可以更有弹性，或许我们也可以做成像新天地那样的。现在我们只能按照规定做。当然我们也没有提出什么颠覆性的设计，那样就有故事讲了。如果说到创造的话，我想应该就是那些 shop-houses 中间有一个小广场，那个是我们创造的。

Abstract

Let's talk about some background first. The main land use for Central Mall is entertainment and commercial. The site next to Central Mall was built at the same period. There was a private site south of the site of Central Mall and a temple on the northwest side. There were some old buildings on this site needing to be conserved, including some shop-houses and ware-houses. The car-park in the middle of it was required by URA. When we bid for this site, there was a 6 to 7-storey office building standing on the private site. It was already the property of our client. The client wanted to refurbish this building and add a new car-park when URA opened the tender for the site of Central Mall. There was a car-park building in this project and the location was also good for our client. So the client bid for this site.

In architecture design, we linked the required car-park building with the car-park of the office building. So this site does not have its own car-park entrance now. For the old buildings, URA gave strict guidelines. So we complied with these guidelines and conserved these old buildings and just changed the usage. For the big warehouses, we had planned to put 4 cinema-plexes in it, but it failed because of poor accessibility. The warehouses were very normal along Singapore River many years ago. The cargos came through the river and put the goods down into warehouses. But now there were only a few warehouses left. The process of this

project is not very complicated. We completely complied with the guidelines to do conservation and create public space. The public space in the middle of Riverside Village was required by URA. There was a small square and a pedestrian mall opening towards the mosque at the end of the pedestrian mall.

The planning for this area is mainly according to the planning for Singapore River in 1994. But this planning has a lot of problems. First, this area was included into the Singapore River planning but received very limited benefits from the river. The direct distance is not too far, but a big road separated this area from river completely. There was only a sky bridge over this road. And the northwest side was an important entrance for this area. But now a building at that side totally blocked the vision from this side. About urban design, URA divided this area into very small parcels and gave them to different developers. This is another reason for its current situation. Each parcel was developed by different developers. And these developers would develop it according to their own idea and interests and seldom care about others. So this whole site was lack a main attraction. It had everything, residential, commercial, F&B without a focus. But the residence on this site was not enough to support those commercial and entertainment facilities. URA actually wanted to create diversity by introducing different developers but it was just an ideal. The reality was not like that. If the whole area could be given to one developer with a complete development plan, or the developers could gather and make some coordination plan before development, it would not be like this. But now, everyone just developed on its own, careless about other's interests. We can do nothing about it, It should be done by URA.

Little free space was left for architect in this project. The conservation guidelines were very strict. If they could be more flexible, we could do another Xintiandi on this site. Now we have to comply with the rules. But the small square in the middle of Central Mall was actually created by us.

Interview 8

Time: May, 2nd, 2006

Venue: Architecture Department of NUS, Singapore

Interview with: Mr. Goh Hop Chor

A: Author

G: Goh Hup Chor

G: First you have to understand all the projects are not included in the conservation districts. That means in Singapore, there are three conservation districts: Chinatown, Little India and Kampong Glam. The idea is these areas are districts. That means within the districts, there are buildings that are new buildings. Because when you do a district, you can not be pure one right? And then selective areas are Singapore River. These are what we call significant areas. So there are

districts, and there are significant areas that we will do conservation. These are very clear, guidelines, everything is given. When you do a new building within these areas, you also have to be controlled by guidelines. These areas are of course, guidelines are very strict. We have to confirm to the rules.

The areas you mention such Bugis Junction, there were old buildings left there but primarily these areas main for redevelopment. Because these areas are lots of more land and in fact, the original idea was that all these lands were cleared and new buildings will be built. You can see some of them in China Square or in Rochor area and the area near Kampong Glam. These areas are all similar areas. They are very big areas. But in Bugis Junction, there were some buildings, in China Square, there were some buildings. When we consider these areas, we thought it will be quite good to make the developer reserve or restore some of these buildings with some condition. It means that we allow these areas to be redeveloped but if you buy the redevelop land, you have to do the conservation of these buildings. And we have written in our tender conditions that if the contractors do conservation, we will in many ways compensate them in forms of plot ratio. We also prepared if the tenders is a bit lower, because they have to spend money on conservation. We have already taken those things in our consideration when we decide to do that. These are things we think it policy. For those of physical development, we also make sure that we need the developed area are able to do the car-park underground and so on. So it is very clear that even some buildings worth to be conserved, we will also allowed them to demolish them. In those areas, we are very generals about conservation. We can allow them to keep the face of the building and demolish the back part and so on. The idea of all these concepts is to have these areas a bit of old and new. In these areas it is like high-rise new and low-rise old. So what we are doing in these areas was to give a bit of charm to the developments and give some of romance to the developments. In some way these old building would diversity the urban landscape. This is an opportunity for us.

For Bugis Village, as a process, you have to understand when you are lose to MRT station, like most of the thing, like China Square, this area (Bugis). If you are close to a railway station, the government will acquire the land within two hundred meters. We did a radius of MRT stations, about two hundred meters. Within this radius, all buildings have to be required as a policy because the argument is that government is bringing the investment to the MRT, and that is the result of the investment of the MRT. The private sector should not benefit the potential brought by MRT. The private owners would become a win fore if we provide the MRT. So the policy is quite blanket that everything within this radius had to be acquired. So a lot of buildings were acquired by this policy, unless the building is a high-rise. They are already there for example T.K.Tan was there, where orchard road station was built. The Shaw building on the other side also submitted the application. If you have a high rise or you will build a high rise can submit applications such as Mandarin Hotel, the phoenix hotel. They are all there because they are there already so they don't need to be acquired. They have no potential to redevelop. So this is the main point. But the buildings acquired are all

good buildings such as capital building. After acquired, the government owns these building. The URA owns these buildings. In the old days, URA would own properties. So URA owns these buildings and has the central area planning authority, and also car-parking management. When the government decided to bring planning department into URA and make URA the national authority of planning. A company founded to manage the properties of URA so the company was called the Capital Land, Subsequently, Capital Land also board to DBS Land, So what we see the Capital Land is a big developer. But initially all their properties are belongs to URA, because URA own these property for two reasons. Funan Centre is built by URA. a few more building in the old days such as the orchard point. We built these buildings, and we set them purposely. These are all resettlement centers. So URA owns these properties as resettlement centres.

At that time, to these buildings, we could not commercially or what we called sell it yet and we have to keep these building going. So we have to restore the building. So URA spent money to restore them such as Stanford House. It is the same with Bugis Village. It was acquired by the government and now they became the properties of Capital Land.

A: What is the time frame of this restoration before commercialization?

G: You have to go back. The conservation of Chinatown, I think it is probably 1992. We were doing these things. I am not sure, maybe 1994. We would the money of URA to restore the buildings. If you look at to the URA year book you should find what time they were restored, so all of these were properties of URA at that time. We have to spend money to restore them. Because at that time there was some saying that conservation is not a viable business. They say since the URA has lost the conservation so much, URA must do conservation spending your own money to restore them. That was the direction came to us. They we have to accept the decision. At Tanjong Pagar, we use our own conservation theme to restore them. At the same time when we restore it, we also own quite a bit of Tanjong Pagar land. The whole area belongs to us. The conservation land should not become the burden for other land the URA has to fix the music. So in 1989, I restored one of the buildings, No. 30 or something. We have to tell the public how to do conservation. We will given you all the guidelines to help you, we give you all the details if you wish to, and then we have a open show house for everybody to see what is conservation and what it cost us and what we did. That was the first one. That was the first building restored.

For Bugis Village is the same, because they are properties of URA, so we spend money to restore them. At that time, conservation building was considered to be money losing property. We were supposed to clear and sell the land, for high commercial thing. This is the thing in 1980s, but the recession made us to think that many be we just restore the building. So we argue with the government that we restore it for 20 years and then to see what to do. Then the government said why 20 years? Are you sure the buildings can last 20 years? Because that was how the skeptic is for conservation. Then you can understand how difficult it was

to conserve the whole three districts. So we sell a piece of land and we own 15% response. Then after that, we pull back again with something more unique and this time we got around 90% response. The price of the land is very good. So the market is convinced that conservation is something that you do the building, you buy is at three thousand, and you restore it with half a million, which is equivalent with the terrace house outside for that mount of money. But here you can rent a shop window, and we can use it for offices. So a lot of architects found it is useful. So when we finished this area, the price of the buildings was three times of the first one. And that of course helped this area.

For buildings at Bugis village, we could sell it if we want to. The reason why we did not sell this land is that there was plenty of land, and we would sell this land out. We could have some conservation in Bugis Village; we could also have the idea of ChinaSquare to tell them you can not tear them down. When they come, they want to re-create a Bugis Street in this site. Then we have to restore the buildings on this site and then rent them out. Because there was land at the back, you can actually develop it. It still has potential because next capital land there was a car-park, so that is to say the area inside can be a high rise, with a theater in the front. For these reasons, we do not sell the land out; the government could use the building first. So we put our money to restore the shop-houses on this site. This is one example; Stanford House and Capital Theater are other examples.

The buildings to be restored were still in good condition at that time but the whole floor was a slope. So we have to level the floor. We also fix the windows; some of them were in good condition. We did not do any air condition we allow them to have their own. So

We just clean up the buildings; we did not add any building.

For the land behind the fixed buildings, only 30 years temporary use is allowed. So STPB come to this site and do the re-creation thing there. The idea is that the short term use could be cleared to give way to future high-rise development. So this was the entire concept.

Another reason is that the Bugis area was supposed to be a destination of resettlement, because of the MRT station here. We want to bring population in this area. That is why we restore these buildings and start Bugis Junction. we want to make it alive. The decision of National Library was made after all these were done.

For Bugis Junction, the whole land is supposed to be sold for redevelopment. But we put in the sale condition that if you real keep the old buildings, you are allowed more percentage of plot ratios, or you can build higher on the new land. So the developers can choose, they can tear them down if they don't want it. Conservation is a optional condition here. If you do conservation, you will get some bonus to encourage you to keep them. If you think it is not worthy, then you lost your plot ratio. You can not have both. You also have your price in because at

that time you have to submit your price. We also have to evaluate the design and then a price. Because a good design and a lower price we still can go, But the design is acceptable and the price is high, of cause we will let it go. But if the design is poor, I can reject you. This is one area, design and price, both have to be submitted. Some areas is purely price. When they submit, they don't need to show the design. But this one they have to submit design. One of the submission, the lowest one, it is a very beautiful design, a very low one, the price is very low but the design was very nice. But we did not give it to them. We give it to this one whose design is acceptable and at the same time, the price was good.

For the car-park, every development, if you do commercial, you have to do car park. Although you have a train station, it does no mean you do not need car park. In Orchard Road, it is not worthy to do car park because there are so many car-part and you paid a high chargers it is very hard for you to get in and out.

For Bugis Junction, it is possible to do underground car park because there were still some land without buildings. The old buildings on this site were concentrated on a street without sewer. This is the same as Tanjong Pagar. This land was acquired because of MRT; Tanjong Pagar was acquired because of no sewer. Tanjong Pagar was far from MRT. This whole area in Tanjong Pagar, there was no sewer. They were still using buket system. The sewer used to come from the front of the house. There were no sew well at the back. So what we have to do was to create the back lanes. The URA had to create the back lanes before we sold the land. Even in the 1989 around, they are still use the buket system. They have no other way. So the whole area was acquired to be redevelopment. So they area lucky that we have a economic recession. We just ask if we can keep the buildings. So the whole idea of Tanjong Pagar was restoration. In Bugis Village, all the restored buildings belong to Capital Land. They used to belonging to URA. Now the situation is different. The land behind is real estate land, you cannot give them anymore. In a sense this piece of land could be very good for sell to very high rise building.

The story of Bugis Junction was: they have some old buildings; Mr. Lim Chee Onn was the boss of the developer, the Keppel Land. He happens to know the minister very well. Then take the condition of conservation, when you restore, you can not tear down the building because that is not the rule. When they want to do a massive car park, they have to block the buildings. If you are short of car-park, you can always go down in basement if you wish to and of course this would cost. For every basement you go down, it will cost you more money. So they want to tear down these old buildings so they can easily build a car-park with cheaper cost. They come back to URA but I said no. You have made a promise already. If I break my words, that would be unfair to other tenderers. I choose them because of the design because they kept the building. I can not break the rule. So when they come back, I said no. If you need to spent more money, you have to. I allowed you to tear down the building at the back, leaving the front only, or if the building is too bad, can not to restore, I can also allow you to tear it down. You must submit the support thing so that I can allow. They are of course very

smart. They calculated if the basement going down, how much money would be spent. If the buildings can be torn down, and then rebuilt the whole thing, how much would cost. When they come to URA, URA as a authority said no since I sold you because of the condition. You can complain to the boss, the minister. So they complain to the Minister because Mr. Lim was very familiar with him. So they went up to the Minister. The Minister asked us for report. The Minister said you have to say yes. The minister can say yes, but I can not because my rules are there. Since the Minister is over me, so it is OK.

But I would not to say the Minister make a wrong decision. This is merits. The quality of the restoration you see today is also built by new and old. But these things are not conservation. I have no problem. I thing the Minister has his reason. It is a high commercial core. For me it was the fact that we can not break the roles. We have to keep the principles. It is not means that it is not possible. It is possible. It just cost.

But from the Minister's stand point, it has to be a higher lever decision. The decision would benefit in a bigger picture. It was not a wrong decision. I said no because I have to say no because we set the rule. You must see the times. It was not conservation district. It is like good to have. Like Bugis Village, I would say no definitely. This is important because these buildings were exposed in the front. But in Bugis Junction, they were not in front, they were complement. But one thing should be clear that the rule we have to follow to avoid in another day someone would also bread the rule. Considering the bigger picture, I think the Minister made a good decision.

It is time not the influence of the developer made this. All the developers might find very big names. The Clarke Quay was DBS Land; the one in Albert Street was Far East. They are very big company. In this case, the person happened to know the Minister. It just happened have the change to explain the problem. The Minister was the champion of conservation. If you want to encourage conservation, you have to be sensible. You have to make it economic viable for the other guy and to be sensible about it. So you see in the conservation districts, when you have to restore, you are weaved for car-park in-chargers, If you want to change of use, you do not need to pay the fee for the change. All these are to encourage people to restore. At the back, we also allow them to tear down to get more floor area. I already was incentive for them in this case.

This one is different from China Square. China Square is a policy for a area, and this is the only site with old buildings in the middle of the development. It is not so sensitive; China Square is a total area policy and quite comprehensive. So we have earlier decision to say restore them. But Bugis Junction is different. It stands alone. It has linked with nothing else. It was a economic decision at that time. You mush see all the aspects before to make judgment.

In Riverside Village, the policy is like China Square. The temple at the corner is never acquired. It was conserved. The conservation in Riverside Village is

compulsory. We allow them to built new buildings and complement with old buildings. That is, we give a area, there are some warehouses here and roads here and there. Then we just say Ok this is conservation building, we sell the land and then we ask you to conserve these. In this area it was very clear, the conservation is compulsory because we need to create the whole charm. This is not a site, this is a whole area. So these buildings would be conserved. Bugis Junction is area by itself. It is not a area. In China Square, the whole area is conserved. We started the whole area. We first marked which buildings we want and then we cut the parcel. After that we decide which parcel could have a new one. The policy for this whole area is very clear. The whole area is to have the high buildings and the low conservation building. In Riverside Village, it is the same. It is new high and low old. Bugis Junction is different. It is supposed to be a new high area. If the old buildings can be kept, it is good. It is one off. In China Square, it is one whole area. If the tearing down is allowed, the policy of the whole area is meaningless. I will call the area a new area. So in China Square, conservation is compulsory, and so do Riverside Village. Bugis Junction is a land parcel. Some time the land parcel has a unique building. That is different.

About the roads, there is the Merchant Road cut through the area. This is a very important road as part of the whole island system. Merchant Road brings all the way to Raffles Place and the junction is a very important junction. All the big roads have to be above ground. That was how the disaster happened. The economists think it was very expensive to make them underground. That to me is the established condition. The road has to go through the Riverside Village.

We were thinking if the temple could be conserved and the landscape near the temple was done by us. The developer of course in today's context, they actually can build some deck across the big roads. This area is not like Boat Quay, there are not so many people. Before the development, this area was ruining. If we do not take action, all the buildings would fall down. For developers, to build such deck bridge is quite easy. They can be easily linked with the buildings. What we have planned for is that we push them to have a conservation community. The bridges are supposed to be built by the developers. If you are sensibility developer, you would build a bridge. The thing is if you get the authority to build, they are not the best because you do not have a plan; you do not have your programme. So it is not the best way for the thing. Actually the best is you get the developer to do it. So you can build the level, and you can also build inside walks into your building. And they can make it suitable for them. In Boat Quay, we have to do more things, because if we do not, the whole plan is a mass. So we have to do something to make it looks good to tell people this place is nice. This is in some way like promotion. But it doesn't mean that is the best thing to do. Government is actually not the best one to do this because you have no plan, you have no purpose, what is your design philosophy? So you can not do these things to this context. Not the best way. The best is the developer with intention to do them more comprehensively. In this area, we encourage conservation and we allow diversity, so it is a bit of mixed here. It is come to that way. It is supposed to be a mixed area. You can not make things too strictly controlled or out of control. We

have to make sure they do not make the area a mall; we have to make sure the service area would be at back lanes. So we have to control some of these. But you can not be the same thing like Boat Quay and Clarke Quay because it is not for the town. They are for people in the residential there and they eat there. It is not a place you expect the whole town to go there. It would be very interesting if you have different places like niche market. In Singapore, if a place is good, the whole town would come and there would be hundred of tables. We don't want that thing. This area is supposed to for a guy to celebrate birthday and want to ten tables. So the whole idea is to create a atmosphere like that. It supposed to be more residential, a bit of office and Soho. That was the intention. This area would become a good case of Soho area. A good Soho area is not in Clarke Quay, there is no commercial. A good Soho area is here. Not is the area next to the MRT station. China Square is also not a good Soho area. That area is mainly for business, hotel and a bit of service apartment to support the downtown, not the kind of offices. It should be hotel, service apartment. This area should be Soho area. People would stay here, work here and eat here. Very close to the CBD. In China Square, it has cheaper rental offices. It is not a good way to plan the city. The city must have very clear area. It has very good office spaces, and then you have the secondary offices in somewhere out. And in some places you would have Soho area and people live there. It is not like you can not afford CBD and you could get cheaper rental at China Square near the CBD. The city could not expand in that way. You have to have some clear areas. You would have hotel, service apartment, and they can support the CBD. Then your secondary office would be somewhere else. People who want a cheap office, they would be quite happy to have a office in home. So it is not like that kind of pattern. So the whole idea of China Square is to support the downtown by having activities.

But they should not do so much commercial in Riverside area, what they should do is more Soho or others related to residential. This area is supposed to be very cute coffee house, bars with residential around. It would come to alive in the weekend, a little bit longer hours. But if you want to do a business with 60 tables, can not. There should be more charming residential, Soho units upstairs. This area is for certain kind of people, if you like this kind of life you will stay in this area. Many places in Singapore, we are lack of specialization. But when the city goes on, the specialization is very important, because that is called variety. People would need this variety. So this is the approach of this area. It is not a mistake. People would eventually come to the value of it, the location, because the location can not be created. A lot people do not understand. This is the matter of time. At every point of time, the value is changing, the condition would change, and the context would change. So you must use the axles according to the time.

Appendix 4 Urban Design Guide Plans for China Square

The planning concepts and objectives were crystallized into a set of detailed urban design plans to guide the physical development of the area. Some of the plans included:

Building Form Plan

Height controls were stipulated for different parts of China Square to achieve the urban design concept of a low-rise centre flanked by a high-rise edge. Within individual parcels, different height zones were used to create a transition effect between the conserved buildings and the new development. (Figure A4-1)

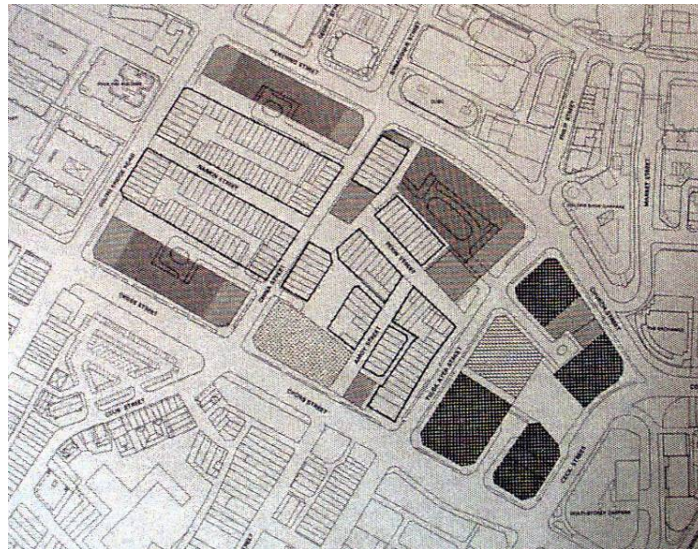


Figure A4-1 Building form plan

Streetscape Plan

Mandatory and recommended building edges were stipulated to tie in new developments with the surrounding urban fabric and maintain the traditional street-block character of

the area. Buildings were generally required to be built up to the road line to create a strong urban edge. However, the guidelines still allowed some flexibility for façade articulation. (Figure A4-2)

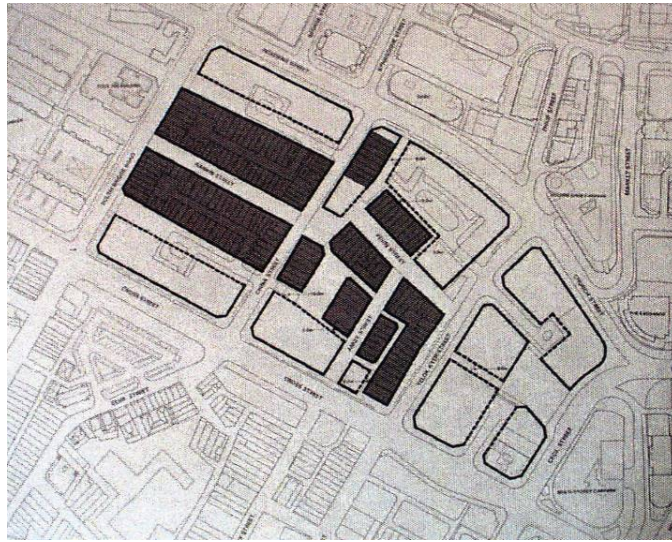


Figure A4-2 Streetscape plan

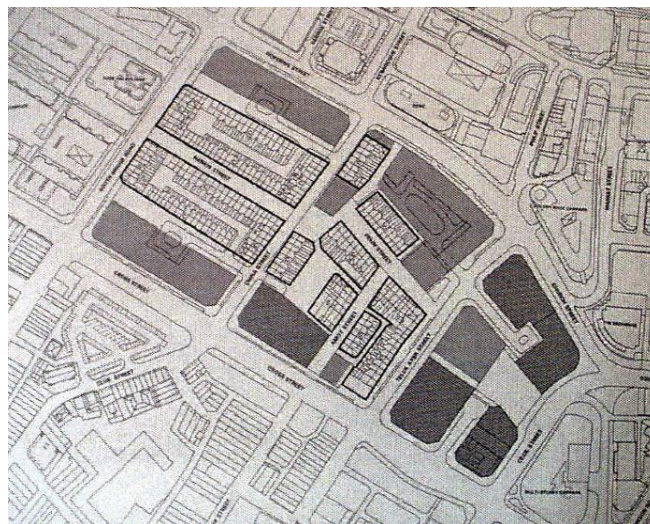


Figure A4- 3 Roofscape plan

Roofscape Plan

Areas where pitched roofs or flat roofs could be allowed were shown in the roofscape plan. Generally, new high-rise buildings were allowed to have flat roofs while buildings next to the conservation buildings were required to have pitched roofs to match. (Figure A4- 3)

Vehicular Access Plan

The proposed road system and vehicular ingress and egress points to individual developments were shown in the plan. Generally, access to developments was only allowed from China Street and Telok Ayer Street to avoid traffic conflict along the major arterial roads. (Figure A4-4)

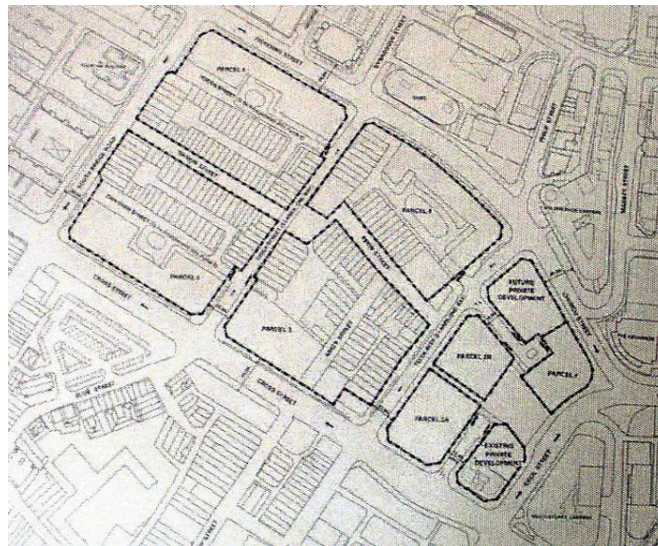


Figure A4-4 Vehicular circulation

Pedestrian Network Plan

This plan showed the proposed pedestrian malls, the park and the pedestrian underpasses. The various components will combine to form an integrated pedestrian network, allowing easy movement within China Square and providing comprehensive links to surrounding areas. (Figure A4-5)



Figure A4-5 Pedestrian network